OCTOBER 7, 2019

TIME

TIME
VOL. 194, NO. 14 | 2019

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Product designer Miyo Iwasaki paints the face of a gender-neutral doll on Sept. 5 in El Segundo, Calif.

Photograph by Angie Smith for TIME

ON THE COVER: *Illustration by Edel Rodriguez for TIME*

TIME (ISSN 0040-781X) is published weekly, except for two weeks in February and December and one week in January, May, June, July, August, September, November due to combined issues by TIME USA, LLC. **PRINCIPAL OFFICE:** 225 Liberty Street, New York, NY 10281-1008. Periodicals postage paid at New York, N.Y., and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send all UAA to CFS (See DMM 507.1.5.2); **Non-Postal and Military Facilities:** Send address corrections to Time Magazine, PO BOX 37508 Boone, IA 50037-0508. Canada Post Publications Mail Agreement # 40069223. BN# 888381621RT0001. © 2019 TIME USA, LLC. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A. **CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SUBSCRIPTIONS:** For 24/7 service, please use our website: ***www.time.com/myaccount.*** You can also call 1-800-843-8463 or write Time Magazine PO Box 37508 Boone, IA 50037-0508. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is strictly prohibited. Your bank may provide updates to the card information we have on file. You may opt out of this service at any time. ◆◆◆◆◆◆◆

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WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT ...

THE NEW AMERICAN ADDICTION Jamie Ducharme's Sept. 30 cover story on the popularity of Juul e-cigarettes among adolescents was eye-opening for adults. Julie Lori of Mequon, Wis., was keenly interested, as she has seen "the explosion of vaping among students" at the high school where she works. The story got John Dorgan of Spring Hill, Fla., thinking about why vaping appeals to young people, and he was left feeling that "the cool-looking cloud of vapor it produces" is key. Alan Remde, a doctor in Asbury, N.J., said he thinks that if scientific data proves Juul can help cigarette smokers quit, it should be prescription-only for use as part of an addiction-recovery program—but that if the stats aren't there, e-cigarettes should be "illegal" because "they cause harm and serve no value to society."

> ***'We need more federal regulations, and ads should be limited.'***
>
> **LINDA J. ROBERTSON,** Richmond, Calif.

SHOUTING INTO THE VOID Lyz Lenz's essay in that same issue asked how many personal stories women will have to share to get others to listen. "Answer: it will never be enough," tweeted Katy Otto of Philadelphia. "It shouldn't take our tears for our voices to be heard," tweeted @TaylorMaxw. Robert E. Smith of Ada, Mich., was turned off by the opening image of Senator Jeff Flake and an activist, which he felt set a "guilty until proven innocent" tone. But Twitter user @kate_cottle hailed Lenz for looking toward a different future. "We're planting the seeds," she wrote, "but we may not see the trees."

> ***'Lyz Lenz's essay so profoundly brought home what it is to be a woman.'***
>
> **PATRICIA AYERS SCHMIDT,** Scottsdale, Ariz.

Back in TIME

Barbie's New Body
Feb. 8, 2016

Eliana Dockterman's feature on Mattel's new gender-neutral doll *(page 40)* does not mark the first time she has gotten an exclusive look at the toymaker's wares. In 2016, when Mattel released Barbies in petite, tall and curvy sizes, she examined the meaning of the doll's evolution. "American beauty ideals have evolved," she wrote, "fueling a movement that promotes body acceptance." Read that story at **time.com/vault**

***TIME* FOR KIDS** TFK Kid Reporter Zara Wierzbowski recently interviewed U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, whose new picture book, *Just Ask,* is about how differences make kids special—and, as Sotomayor put it, life's challenges make you "stronger." Read more at **timeforkids.com**

bonus TIME health

Subscribe to TIME's free health newsletter and get **a weekly email full of news and advice** to help keep you well. For more, visit **time.com/email**

***TIME* 100 EXPANDS** Following the success of the first-ever TIME 100 Summit in April, TIME has announced the launch of two new events taking place this fall in New York City: the TIME 100 Health Summit, on Oct. 17, and the TIME 100 Next Summit, on Nov. 14. As part of this expansion, TIME will also release the first annual TIME 100 Next list, which will highlight the 100 individuals who are shaping the future of their fields. Read more at **time.com/summit-news**

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TIME FOR KIDS: ADAM WIERZBOWSKI

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

OCTOBER 15, 2019 | SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Women in the Workplace brings together ambitious leaders for a real conversation about how to be better at building inclusive workplaces. By hearing from game-changers doing things differently and unpacking data gleaned from tens of thousands of employees, this community will work toward a common goal: creating more—and more rewarding—opportunities for all individuals at every level, in every industry.

Highlights from last year:

"Diversity isn't just the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do."
—Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook and LeanIn.org

"We're living in a time where not having a diverse talent pool puts you at a competitive disadvantage. And it's a beautiful time."
—Anu Aiyengar, J.P. Morgan

"You change people more with stories than statistics."
—Reed Hastings, Netflix

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Read ambitiously

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For the Record

‘It’s an incredibly exciting time for New Zealand and its relationship with China—sorry, excuse me, with Japan.’

JACINDA ARDERN,
New Zealand’s Prime Minister, in Tokyo on Sept. 18 during her first official trip to Japan

$353,000

Value of jewelry stolen in recent heists from apartments in Trump Tower in New York City

‘I want people to realize you’re never too broken to be fixed.’

JONATHAN VAN NESS, *Queer Eye* star, in a New York *Times* interview about his memoir *Over the Top,* in which he opens up about living with HIV

‘THE FUTURE DOES NOT BELONG TO GLOBALISTS. THE FUTURE BELONGS TO PATRIOTS.’

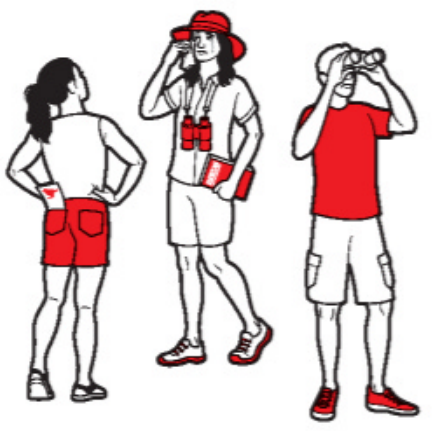
DONALD TRUMP,
U.S. President, in a speech at the U.N. General Assembly on Sept. 24

‘The World Cup’s obviously incredible to win, but when we sort of all look back on it, it will be the way we’ve changed the game and moved the game forward … that we’ll all be most proud of.’

MEGAN RAPINOE,
forward on the World Cup–winning U.S. women’s soccer team, accepting the award for Best FIFA Women’s Player of 2019 on Sept. 23

‘We hardly have water in our taps. We pray daily that the cholera outbreak does not recur.’

TAMBUDZAI MURWA,
resident of the Harare area, to CNN, after officials shut down the Zimbabwean capital’s main water-treatment plant on Sept. 23 because of a shortage of water-purification chemicals



2.9 billion

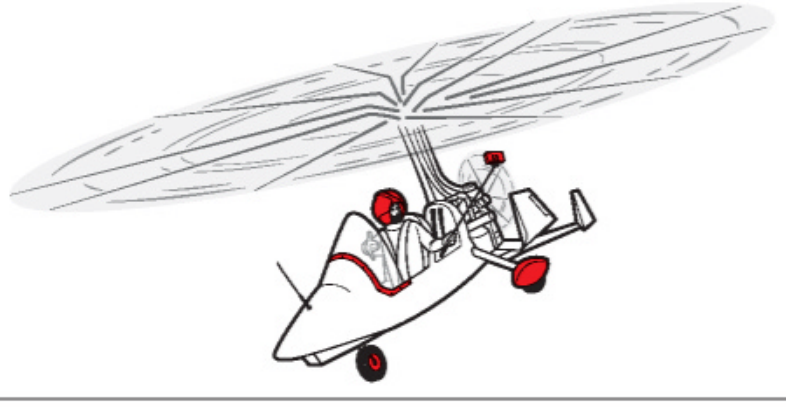
Number of birds that have disappeared from the U.S. and Canada since 1970—down by nearly one-third

Emmy
Ratings for the Emmy Awards on Sept. 22 hit a record low

Emma
GlaxoSmithKline CEO Emma Walmsley is set to be the fifth woman on Microsoft’s board

24,000

Distance, in nautical miles, that British daredevil James Ketchell flew to circumnavigate the globe in a gyrocopter; his journey, which ended on Sept. 22, appears to be the first of its kind



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SOURCES: ASSOCIATED PRESS; CNN; DEADLINE; NEW YORK TIMES; SCIENCE

The Brief

ON GUARD
A riot-police officer watches protesters in Hong Kong on Sept. 21

INSIDE

A SUPREME COURT RULING DEALS BORIS JOHNSON A BLOW

SPAIN DECIDES TO EXHUME FRANCISCO FRANCO'S BODY

THE U.K.'S OLDEST TRAVEL COMPANY COLLAPSES

PHOTOGRAPH BY MIGUEL CANDELA

WORLD

Will Hong Kong unrest spoil China's big day?

By Laignee Barron/Hong Kong

THE STREETS ARE SWEPT, THE SOLDIERS rehearsed and the stealth drones ready to be put on display. As Beijing prepares to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China on Oct. 1, even the trade war will suspend hostilities, with the U.S. delaying additional tariffs. Yet one key birthday wish will not be granted: an end to the protests that have rocked semiautonomous Hong Kong for over three months. The unrest could reach a turning point come National Day, as China's ruling Communist Party vows to let nothing spoil its big parade.

What began in Hong Kong as a protest against a controversial bill has spawned a rebellion against the city's political masters in Beijing. The bill that sparked the dissent, which would have allowed extradition to mainland China, was withdrawn in early September, but protesters insist four other demands must be met, including one for fully democratic elections. Weekend protests now routinely turn violent, with black-clad demonstrators hurling bricks and gasoline bombs, smashing train stations and setting garbage alight in the street. In response, police have started making more arrests and on Sept. 23 reiterated a threat to fire live ammunition. It's rumored that Beijing gave Hong Kong authorities until Oct. 1 to quell the pro-democracy protests, but no amount of deadlines, tear gas or aggression by government supporters has been able to bring them to an end.

With the sensitive anniversary looming, some demonstrators have targeted more overtly the symbols of the Chinese government. On Sept. 21, protesters set fire to a Chinese national flag. The next day, they tossed another into the Shing Mun River north of the city center. But the date of modern China's founding represents the biggest target yet for protesters. In a sign of just how jittery officials are about potential disruptions, the Hong Kong government's invitation to its National Day flag raising calls for guests to arrive before 7:15 a.m., long in advance of rallies planned for the day.

FOR BEIJING, the stakes are high. "Celebrations like the 70th anniversary certainly lend legitimacy to the Chinese Communist Party," says Willy Lam, an adjunct professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong's Center for China Studies. "The propaganda being projected is that even though the Communist Party does not have ballot-box legitimacy, it is beloved by the Chinese people and is going from strength to strength." This milestone is particularly significant, as China's communist state has now outlived the Soviet Union's 69 years, a staying power it attributes to economic and military prowess.

For President Xi Jinping, who abolished term limits last year, the celebrations offer another chance to burnish his credentials as party leader for life. The extravaganza in store includes Xi's expected address to the nation, cultural performances across the country and fireworks. But the real centerpiece is the military parade. Some 15,000 members of the armed forces will goose-step down Beijing's Avenue of Eternal Peace as fighter jets fly overhead and 580 pieces of military hardware go on display, including intercontinental ballistic missiles and the new Sharp Sword stealth drone.

But as Xi seeks to project an image of Chinese strength and unity, the discontent in Hong Kong offers an alternative picture. "Under Xi Jinping, China's message to the world is that the China model is superior to the liberal values and the universal suffrage practiced in the West," says Lam. But this "is belied by the fact that in Hong Kong, the one free place in China, the China model is being rejected."

The situation in Hong Kong also threatens Xi's long-held ambition of Chinese reunification with the self-governing island of Taiwan. Beijing had hoped the "one country, two systems" framework for semi-autonomy in Hong Kong, a former British colony, could be a model for bringing Taiwan back into the fold after seven decades of estrangement. But as the framework has eroded in Hong Kong, popular support for sovereignty among Taiwan's citizens has swelled further. "We will not become another Hong Kong," President Tsai Ing-wen pledged in July.

An empire beginning to fray at the edges is not the vision Xi wants to present to the world on Oct. 1. It's still unclear how long China's most powerful leader since Mao Zedong will tolerate this state of affairs. Beijing has not followed through on its threats in the summer to activate troops in Hong Kong, and analysts generally agree that the optics of a bloody intervention would have global repercussions, especially for Xi's ambitions overseas. But with the Communist Party's pride on the line, a brazen escalation by protesters on China's National Day could finally prompt serious retaliation.

The heightened tensions in Hong Kong have grabbed the U.S.'s attention, as President Donald Trump made clear in his address to the U.N. General Assembly on Sept. 24. "How China chooses to handle the situation will say a great deal about its role in the world in the future," he said. Beijing will be hoping all eyes turn to China on Oct. 1 as it marks its 70th birthday. But the protesters in Hong Kong are aware that the world is now watching them too. "The U.S. and all countries based on democratic values should be standing up with Hong Kong," says Yukki Leung, 30. "This is a fight for freedom." □

'Under Xi Jinping, China's message to the world is that the China model is superior.'

WILLY LAM, scholar, on the optics of Oct. 1 celebrations

PREVIOUS PAGE: SOPA IMAGES/SIPA USA; XI: XINHUA/SIPA USA; EGYPT: OLIVER WEIKEN—PICTURE-ALLIANCE/DPA/AP

RAISED VOICES A man climbs atop fellow demonstrators during rare antigovernment protests on Sept. 21 in Cairo, where unapproved public gatherings of more than 10 people have been banned since President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi led a 2013 coup against Egypt's first democratically elected leader. Local NGOs say authorities have arrested more than 1,000 people since protesters took to the streets on Sept. 20 for two days of rallies in several cities across the country.

THE BULLETIN

Brexit chaos rises after a historic Supreme Court ruling against Boris Johnson

ON SEPT. 24, U.K. SUPREME COURT President Brenda Hale wore a large, spider-shaped brooch to announce that the court had found Prime Minister Boris Johnson's suspension of Parliament "unlawful, void and of no effect." Lawmakers returned to work the next day, three weeks earlier than planned, resuming their scrutiny of Johnson's plans ahead of Britain's scheduled exit from the E.U. on Oct. 31. And as Hale's choice of jewelry became a viral hit, her words left Johnson even more entangled in a web of his own making.

ROGUE DECISION On Aug. 28, Johnson announced plans to "prorogue" (or suspend) the sitting of both the upper and lower chambers of Parliament for five weeks. His plan was denounced by opposition lawmakers and many in his own party as a ploy to prevent the passage of laws that would make a "no-deal" Brexit illegal. But if that was his plan, it failed: lawmakers rushed through legislation doing just that, shortly before Parliament was closed on Sept. 9.

COURT RED-HANDED With the U.K. lacking a written constitution, the Supreme Court was called to weigh in. Its justices deliberated for three days over whether they even had the authority to adjudicate on prorogation, which Johnson's government insisted was a "purely political matter." But the decision was ultimately unanimous. The suspension was unlawful, the 11 justices said, because it frustrated "the ability of Parliament to carry out its constitutional functions without reasonable justification."

POLITICAL FALLOUT On Sept. 25, lawmakers returned to Parliament, many of them calling for the resignation of Johnson, who was then in New York City for the U.N. General Assembly. (He flew home early.) But more significant than the bad optics of the court ruling is the upcoming European Council summit on Oct. 17, where Johnson hopes the E.U. will finally offer to compromise on a Brexit deal. If it doesn't, Johnson might soon find himself less like a spider and more like its prey. —BILLY PERRIGO

NEWS TICKER

States sue over auto-emission rules

Twenty-three states sued the Trump Administration on Sept. 20 over its move to **revoke California's authority to set its own vehicle-emission standards.** The suit is part of a larger battle over the Administration's attempts to roll back environmental-protection rules.

El Salvador signs migration deal

As the Trump Administration pressures Latin American governments to curb migration, El Salvador—one of the region's most violent countries—**signed a deal on Sept. 20 that would allow the U.S. to send asylum seekers back there** if they passed through the country en route to the U.S. border.

Facebook shuts down apps

Facebook has **suspended tens of thousands of apps for infractions including privacy violations,** the social network said on Sept. 20. The decision followed an internal investigation that began in 2018, after revelations that Cambridge Analytica had harvested users' data without their permission.

NEWS TICKER

Outrage after 8-year-old shot in Rio

Brazilians criticized the "shoot to kill" law-enforcement policy of the Rio de Janeiro state governor after residents of a Rio favela neighborhood said **stray police bullets killed an 8-year-old girl** on Sept. 20. A record 1,249 people were killed in police raids in the state in the first eight months of 2019.

Climate body releases bleak oceans report

Because of climate change, once rare **natural disasters linked to high sea levels could become annual events,** per a Sept. 25 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report on the world's oceans. Seas are rising faster than before, the report said, and some island nations will likely become uninhabitable.

Controversial Indonesia laws spark protests

On Sept. 24, thousands of students in Indonesia **protested a planned new criminal code that would outlaw extramarital sex and criticism of the President,** as well as a new law they say weakens a national anticorruption body. More than 300 were treated at hospitals during the protests.

GOOD QUESTION

Why is Spain digging up the body of Francisco Franco?

FOR 44 YEARS, SPAIN'S FORMER DICTATOR Francisco Franco has shared a mausoleum with some 34,000 victims of the three-year civil war he started in 1936. Many of the dead who lie at the Valley of the Fallen, a sprawling monument outside Madrid, fought against his military overthrow of Spain's democratic government and installation of a conservative Catholic autocracy. But his grave draws far-right sympathizers to the site, and each day a group of Franco supporters lays flowers there.

That controversial situation will now end, after Spain's Supreme Court, rejecting a legal challenge from Franco's family, ruled Sept. 24 that the government of caretaker Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez may exhume Franco's remains and rebury them in a public cemetery.

The move comes after a long-simmering political battle that has divided Spaniards. "It really galvanizes the left, but the right would rather just not touch it," says Lluís Orriols, a politics professor at Madrid's Carlos III University. "Their voters have slightly more ambivalent feelings about the Franco era." A 2018 poll for Spanish daily *El Mundo* found that 63% of voters in Sánchez's center-left Socialist party backed the exhumation, compared with just 13% of supporters of the center-right People's Party (PP). Last year, lawmakers from the PP and center-right party Citizens abstained from a vote on the matter.

Few defend the human-rights abuses that occurred under the 36-year-long Franco regime. During the civil war and in political purges in the years after, 114,000 Spaniards were disappeared. Fierce censorship, political repression and the persecution of minorities continued until Franco's death in 1975.

But unlike many other modern democracies that emerged in the wake of recent dictatorships, Spain has largely failed to investigate the crimes in the country's past. Last year, Sánchez announced the creation of a truth commission to confront the crimes of the Franco regime; he has said the recent push for exhumation was guided by "a determination to heal the suffering of Franquismo's victims." But many argued that in the case of Franco's remains, it would be better to move on, citing the family's rights and the preservation of an important historical site.

Some also accused Sanchez of opportunism at a crucial time for politics. The Socialists won an April election but not enough seats to govern. One week before the ruling, Spain's fourth elections in four years were announced for Nov. 10. "Sánchez has spent a year playing with [Franco's] bones to try to divide us … but this no longer matters to many Spaniards," Albert Rivera, leader of the Citizens party, said of the ruling.

Whether it matters to Spaniards or not, Franco's body will be moved "as soon as possible" to a public cemetery on the outskirts of Madrid, according to Sánchez's deputy. But with analysts warning that November's poll won't break the stalemate, the Prime Minister's future is far less clear. —CIARA NUGENT

WILDLIFE

Natural celebrity

Inspired by J.R.R. Tolkien's famed hobbit Frodo Baggins, scientists in New Zealand named a newly discovered insect *Psylla frodobagginsi.* Here, more pop taxonomy. *—Alejandro de la Garza*

COMPUTER BUG
In 2018, scientists dubbed a genus of insect *Kaytuesso,* after a droid that joined the *Star Wars* universe in the 2016 movie *Rogue One.* The name is a phoneticized version of the robot's name, K-2SO.

STAR SPIDER
Actor Tobey Maguire played beloved comic-book hero Spider-Man in three films—inspiring researchers to acknowledge him in 2015 by naming a newly identified species of spider *Filistata maguirei.*

FUNNY FUNGI
A species of mushroom found in Malaysia reminded scientists so much of a sponge that in 2011 they called it ***Spongiforma squarepantsii,*** after the Nickelodeon cartoon SpongeBob SquarePants.

Milestones

DIED
A. Alvarez, British poet and writer known for helping popularize the poetry of Sylvia Plath, on Sept. 23 at 90.
> **Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali,** Tunisian autocrat ousted in the Arab Spring, on Sept. 19 at 83.

RESIGNED
Adam Neumann, **co-founder of WeWork,** as CEO of the office-sharing company, on Sept. 24, as its IPO stalled.
> Kevin Burns, **CEO of Juul,** as a series of vaping-related deaths raised concerns about the safety of e-cigarettes.

ENDED
New York City Mayor **Bill de Blasio's presidential campaign,** on Sept. 20.

CHARGED
A 24-year-old soldier in Kansas, on Sept. 23, with **allegedly sharing bomb-making instructions** on the Internet. The FBI said he'd spoken of plans to bomb a U.S. news network.

EXPANDED
Overtime pay to 1.3 million workers, under new Labor Department rules finalized Sept. 24.

SHUT DOWN
Pennsylvania's **Three Mile Island nuclear plant,** on Sept. 20. It will take 60 years to fully decommission the plant, which was the site of the U.S.'s worst commercial nuclear accident.

SUSPENDED
Gunmaker Colt's **production of the AR-15** and other "sporting rifles" for consumers, according to a Sept. 19 company announcement.

FUNGI: TOM BRUNS, UC BERKELEY; SPONGEBOB: GETTY IMAGES; THOMAS COOK: J.A. HAMPTON—HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES; MCMANUS: TED THAI—GETTY IMAGES

When this Thomas Cook holiday to Italy embarked from Victoria Station in London in 1937, the company was already nearly a century old

COLLAPSED

Thomas Cook

The U.K.'s oldest travel company

WHEN ENGLISH CABINETMAKER THOMAS COOK STARTED A travel company in 1841, it sold only day trips from Leicester to Loughborough, via steam train, at a shilling each. More than 178 years later—after surviving 36 U.S. presidencies, two world wars and the reigns of six British monarchs—one of the world's oldest travel companies derailed in spectacular fashion. After Thomas Cook collapsed into liquidation on Sept. 23, having failed to secure the $1.37 billion it needed to stay afloat, its bookings were canceled and hundreds of thousands of travelers were stranded.

In the intervening years, Thomas Cook had revolutionized the travel industry. In 1872, the company was the first to offer passengers a packaged around-the-globe tour; in 1919, just 16 years after the airplane was invented, it was the first to advertise "pleasure flights." When the U.K. economy boomed after World War II, so did Thomas Cook; by the 1950s, more than a million Britons went on holiday each year. In 2003, the company launched its own airline and, having taken on a form that would have been unrecognizable to its Victorian founder, soon began selling all-inclusive trips with Thomas Cook–branded agencies, hotels and planes.

But the company struggled in recent years, battered on all sides by the ease of online travel planning, debts resulting from a 2007 merger, competition from lower-cost rivals like Jet2holidays and the uncertainty of a looming Brexit. Now, with Thomas Cook gone and its beleaguered customers finding routes home without its help, travelers are making their own way once again. —RACHAEL BUNYAN

DIED

Jason McManus

Eminent editor

By Howard Chua-Eoan

IN 1985, I WAS A LOWLY fact checker at TIME and Jason McManus was busy running the magazine, when a colleague showed him the company softball team's yearbook. He read the opening essay in the photocopied booklet and asked, "Who wrote it, and should we hire him?" With that wee recognition, I was on my way to a writer's job at the magazine.

Jason, who died at 85 on Sept. 19, was a prince of TIME. With his Ivy League degree, Rhodes scholar bona fides and experience reporting abroad, he had the cred that, in that era, helped a man rise to boss of the magazine (which he was from 1985 to 1987). He then oversaw the whole Time Inc. stable (as editor-in-chief from 1987 to 1994) during a reign that witnessed the onset of the titanic mergers and corporate ambitions—including the marriage of Warner and Time Inc. in 1990—that would shrink the power of his office and remake media forever.

Beset by immense forces, Jason still never ceased to be a master of the generous gesture. One small kindness helped make my career. So many more of my colleagues were the beneficiaries of his giant heart.

Chua-Eoan, TIME's news director from 2000 to 2013, is deputy editor of *Bloomberg Businessweek*

McManus in 1987

Patagonia chief executive **Rose Marcario** has a plan to fix capitalism (and sell a few fleeces)

By Alana Semuels

THERE ARE TWO SMALL HOLES IN THE CHEST OF my black fleece, as if a vampire took a nip, but Rose Marcario, the CEO of Patagonia, does not think I need a new one. The outdoor-apparel retailer would make more money if Marcario pushed one of the supple pink and purple pullovers on sale for $119 in the Patagonia store downstairs. Instead she suggests a different idea. "You can just patch it," she says, sitting near an open window at Patagonia's camplike Ventura, Calif., headquarters, wearing brown Buddhist prayer beads on her wrist. It's an odd statement for the head of a retailer, but she shrugs and says, "I'm not really a buyer of things."

Patagonia has long been at the forefront of what is now emerging as a popular new flavor of capitalism. Today's customers want their dollars to go to companies that will use their money to make the world a better place. Patagonia donates 1% of sales to environmental groups and in 2016 gave 100% of Black Friday sales—about $10 million—to environmental organizations. In late 2017, it sued President Trump after he issued proclamations to reduce the size of two national monuments. (The case is still making its way through the courts.) Late last year, it changed its mission statement to "We're in business to save our home planet." And on Sept. 20, Patagonia temporarily shut down its stores and offices so that employees—including Marcario—could strike alongside youth climate activists. "Business has to pick up the mantle when government fails you," says Marcario, eating a bowl of hemp pesto pasta from the company's organic cafeteria. "I think we've all realized that we have to go beyond 'Do no unnecessary harm,'" a reference to a version of the company's former motto.

AS A GROWING SHARE of consumers worry about a planet that is getting hotter, and the accompanying droughts, fires and storms, Patagonia's environmental activism has been good for business. The number of belief-driven buyers, who choose a brand on the basis of its position on social issues, is growing worldwide and includes 59% of all shoppers in the U.S., according to a survey of 40,000 consumers by market consultancy Edelman. Nearly 2 in 3 people are belief-driven buyers, according to the Edelman study. "[Patagonia has] fantastic high-quality clothes, but most important is their business philanthropy and social philosophy," says Erin Esposito, 45, who's been a customer for over two decades.

Patagonia is privately held, but a company representative told TIME that sales have quadrupled over the past decade and recently surpassed $1 billion. Young people are clamoring to work at the company's main campus. More than 9,000 people applied for 16 internship positions last summer. Prospective employees are attracted by perks like on-site child care, a cafeteria selling subsidized organic meals, and the opportunity to surf or hike at lunchtime.

Marcario now wants to use Patagonia's reputation to show other companies that capitalism doesn't have to be so focused on profit. She is the former chief financial officer of General Magic, an Apple spin-off, and was an executive at a private-equity firm, but one too many mass layoffs made her start to examine the downside of capitalism. Marcario walked away from her career, spent time with family and traveled through India studying Buddhism. She joined Patagonia as chief financial officer in 2008, becoming CEO in 2014. "To me," says Marcario, "there's still a lot of potential in economies to be more focused on serving humankind."

It's easy to be cynical about Patagonia's motives. The company says it discourages consumption, but it is also a savvy marketer, introducing new colors and styles to its lineup every year. It advises consumers to recycle while also sending customers a constant stream of promotional emails, whetting their appetite to spend. As its executives speak out about climate change, it offers free shipping on orders of more than $50, incentivizing people with easy online shopping, which generates harmful emissions and increased truck traffic. To a skeptic, Patagonia might seem like yet another company that says it wants to be more sustainable while creating more pollution and waste.

But even retail competitors single out Patagonia for its approach. "Patagonia is about two things: quality and values. Simple as that," said Bayard Winthrop, the CEO and founder of American Giant, a clothing company

MARCARIO QUICK FACTS

Family background
Marcario's Italian grandfather immigrated to New York at age 17 with $20 in his pocket and got a job digging the city's streets for 10¢ per day.

Career decisions
After seeing her mother struggle financially when her parents divorced, Marcario went into finance because it seemed like a path to economic stability.

Morning pursuits
Marcario rises at 5 a.m. each day, meditates, answers emails and then tries to go out for a quick kayak trip at the beach near where she lives.

JEFF BROWN

that sources and makes all its products in the U.S. "They consistently execute on those two core ideas and don't get caught up in the noise. This is effectively what puts them in a class of their own."

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM HAS BEEN part of Patagonia's DNA since it was founded. It has donated $100 million since 1985 to environmental groups, including the Conservation Alliance, which it helped found in 1989 and which works to protect nature in America. It has been repairing customers' clothes since the 1970s, and it operates one of the largest apparel-repair centers in North America. In 2013, it launched a venture-capital fund that invests in startups that work on environmental issues, such as Wild Idea Buffalo, which raises buffalo while aiming to restore grasslands to the Great Plains, and Bureo, which converts discarded fishing nets into consumer products like sunglasses. Patagonia "really walks the walk and talks the talk," said Richard Jaffe, an independent retail consultant. "They invest a lot of time and energy into being a catalyst for change."

'Rampant consumerism is not really that attractive to younger generations.'

ROSE MARCARIO,
CEO of Patagonia

It was the first company to make fleece out of recycled bottles with its synthetic chinchilla, or Synchilla, fleeces. In 2005, it launched Worn Wear, which sends employees to college campuses and climbing centers, teaching consumers how to repair things; the company also mends customers' clothes in 72 repair centers globally. Customers can mail in their used gear for store credit, and in 2011, Patagonia ran an ad in the New York *Times* telling customers DON'T BUY THIS JACKET to discourage overconsumption.

In 2012, Patagonia got into the food business because the company decided that the agricultural industry was in need of improvement. Patagonia Provisions now sells sustainably farmed mussels from Spain; buffalo jerky made from free-roaming grass-fed bison; and Marcario's favorite, tsampa dry soup mix, made from organic barley grown in Saskatchewan. Marcario says that in 20 years, Patagonia's food business may be bigger than its apparel business, as consumers figure out how to recycle and repair more of their clothing.

Patagonia was founded by Yvon Chouinard, a California rock climber who began selling climbing pitons he forged in his parents' backyard in the late 1950s. It was Chouinard who persuaded Marcario to re-enter the business world after she left it to question the profit-first motives of the private equity and tech companies where she had previously worked. "It was just kind of destiny," she says about connecting with him in 2008.

Marcario knows that her job is made easier by the fact that people both young and old want Patagonia products—even some people who disagree with the company's politics keep buying its jackets and vests, she says. But she's not afraid to rethink the company's business model as generational attitudes toward shopping and consumption shift. "This idea of rampant consumerism is not really that attractive to younger generations," she says. ☐

LightBox

Global warning

Children at the youth climate strike were among tens of thousands in New York City calling for action on climate change ahead of a United Nations summit on the issue. Teen activist Greta Thunberg was alone when she launched a school strike in Sweden last year; organizers said some 4 million people around the globe joined her on Sept. 20. Still, leaders did not deliver the bold policies activists wanted. Speaking at the U.N., Thunberg condemned their inaction: "How dare you?"

Photograph by Dannah Gottlieb

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HEALTH

HOW SAFE IS BOTTLED WATER?

By Seth M. Siegel

Bottled water has gone from a convenience to an alternative drinking-water system, with about a third of Americans choosing it over tap water most or all of the time. Why? More than 90% of those buying bottled water cite "safety" and "quality" as the reasons, but while it's true that it can indeed be safe, this isn't always the case.

INSIDE

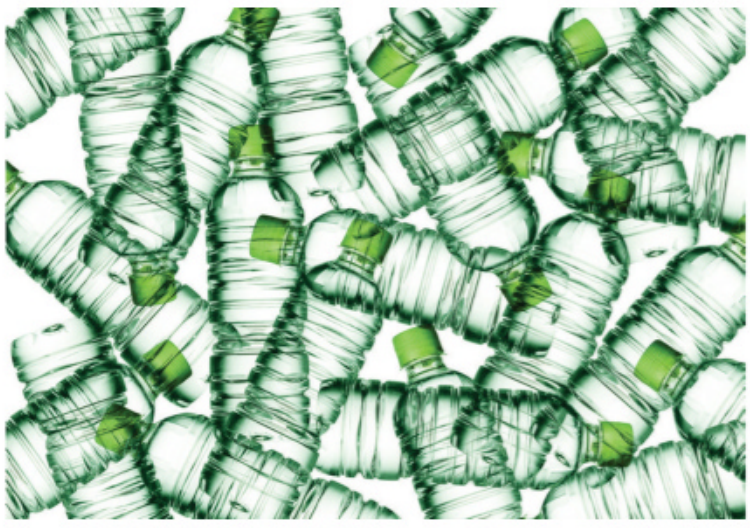
HOPE IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

RETHINKING AMERICAN MILITARY STRATEGY

HOW TIGHTS HELPED SHAKE UP THE '60S

Much has been written about the trash problem created by the billions of disposable plastic drinking-water bottles sold each year in the U.S. Far less is understood about the contents of those bottles. According to a Government Accountability Office (GAO) report from 2009, the most recent data available, about 70% of the bottled water sold in the U.S. was not subject to Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulation. That's because if water is bottled and sold in the same state, as is the case for some smaller labels, it's considered intrastate commerce and is therefore regulated by the state. This isn't necessarily a problem—some states' regulations are stricter than the FDA's—but the GAO report also said these rules can be less comprehensive than those for tap water, which must comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act, administered by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Bottled water under the FDA's purview may not get the scrutiny you expect either. This is not a reflection of the Trump Administration's antiregulation bias. Bottled water was an $18.5 billion (wholesale) industry in the U.S. in 2017, but under Presidents of both parties, FDA oversight has been lightly staffed. Furthermore, the agency allows bottlers to fill bottles with tap water. While the water is usually treated, this is not a guarantee.



THIS ISN'T TO SAY you should worry that every bottle of water you drink is contaminated. Rather, a better understanding of how the industry works is important for public health. Major bottled-water suppliers like Nestlé, Coca-Cola and PepsiCo, as well as prestige brands like Fiji and Perrier, have an incentive to do all they can to sell safe drinking water. At a minimum, they want to make sure that their brands are not injured by a loss of reputation. But there are hundreds of bottled-water brands, and some lesser-known bottlers—working on tiny profit margins—may not share the concern of the most recognizable ones. Because they don't have to worry about public confidence in their brand name, they can stop using one label and start selling under another without changing the source.

A scientifically rigorous study from 1999 by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), which tested three samples of more than 100 bottled-water brands, revealed that about a third of the bottles examined had levels of bacteria or chemical contaminants above state or industry standards or guidelines. Erik D. Olson, senior director for health and food at NRDC, believes a similar test today would yield similar results, but says he can't say for sure without additional monitoring. As an example of ongoing problems, he cites a recent investigation by *Consumer Reports* that found several brands of bottled water contained potentially unsafe levels of arsenic.

The bottles themselves can also present a health concern, as only a small percentage of all bottled water sold in the U.S. is bottled and shipped in a stable material like glass. Even if the water that fills a plastic bottle is pure, if it sits long enough—and especially if it's stored in a hot place—there's a risk of phthalates and other chemical agents in the plastic leaching into the water. Phthalates are endocrine-disrupting agents that pose special threats to pregnant women and young kids.

When contaminated water is found in Flint, Mich.; Newark, N.J.; or Puerto Rico, among other places, millions of bottles are shipped and distributed as a temporary solution. Many people also buy bottled water to consume in their homes, presumably only a few steps from vastly cheaper tap water.

Given the potential risks of bottled water and the pervasive fears about tap, consumers may feel they have nowhere to turn. The answer lies in improving the nation's drinking-water infrastructure through advanced filtration systems—and publicizing that effort—so tap water becomes a more appealing option. No one likes paying over 300 times more than they have to, so by fixing tap water, a virtuous circle would be created: less trash, a better environment, cheaper water, better national health—and the peace of mind that will come from knowing that drinking water is safe.

Siegel is the author of Troubled Water: What's Wrong With What We Drink

SHORT READS

Highlights from stories on **time.com/ideas**

Looking on the bright side

While climate change has accelerated quickly, the technology to combat it can too, write John Brooke, Michael Bevis and Steve Rissing, who teach a course on the subject at the Ohio State University. **"There is hope that we can avert a fundamental civilizational crisis—but only if we take immediate and 'exponential' action."**

Holding up a mirror

In an excerpt from her memoir *Fat, Pretty, and Soon to Be Old: A Makeover for Self and Society,* Kimberly Dark reflects on the ways different types of "big" people are treated. **"Looking is one thing," she writes, "but judging some people worthy of dignity and others not—that's a worry."**

Labor of love

Despite a career in medicine, Arthur Kleinman, author of *The Soul of Care: The Moral Education of a Husband and a Doctor,* learned the most about caring for patients when his wife was struggling with Alzheimer's. **"Caring means both worrying and actively doing something about those worries," he writes.**

GETTY IMAGES (2)

America needs a new strategic triad to face the 21st century

By Admiral James Stavridis

FOR DECADES, nations have thought about the strategic triad as the integration of three systems to deliver nuclear weapons: land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles; long-range strategic bombers like the B-52, B-1 and B-2; and nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submarines. Together, these redundant delivery systems deterred an enemy from a first strike, providing a foundation of national military power. Because creating such systems was an incredibly costly process, required advanced technology and needed highly trained workforces, this strategic triad had extremely high barriers to entry.

As this turbulent 21st century unfolds, a new sort of strategic triad is clearly emerging, recently illustrated by the sophisticated strikes on key Saudi oil fields in the Middle East, which knocked out 5% of the daily global oil supply with low-cost drones and likely used Google Earth for GPS coordinates. This new strategic triad is composed of unmanned vehicles (in the air, but also under and on the sea), offensive cyberstrikes and special forces. All of these are relatively inexpensive, present far lower barriers to entry and can be "equalizers" allowing an asymmetric advantage that a nongreat power (or even a nonstate actor) can utilize.

The ability of these systems to create profound strategic damage—either in stand-alone mode or working synergistically—is increasing. Cyber can attack a nation's electric grid, water-delivery systems, financial markets or medical and transportation networks. Unmanned vehicles, which can remain on station for long periods, can be used with precision to strike weapons at critical nodes. Special forces, like America's Navy SEALs, can be used to enable both cyber and drone attacks by implanting thumb drives and code in critical systems, providing targeting to precision-guided weapons delivered by drones, or moving attack systems closer to national borders.

Of course, it is not only smaller nations like North Korea and Iran exploiting this new triad—Russia is doing so as well. The use of so-called hybrid warfare against Georgia and Ukraine is a good example. Russia has added sophisticated information warfare to the mix, using not only direct offensive cyberattacks against opponents' command and control networks, but also a dangerous mix of propaganda and "fake news" designed to undermine democratic processes in a variety of nations. Perhaps most worryingly, obtaining these types of tools is not beyond the reach of sophisticated nonstate actors, from terrorists to drug cartels.

Cyber can attack a nation's electric grid, water-delivery systems, financial markets or other networks

At present, nations are not especially well positioned to defend against such systems. America's defense establishment will need to deploy a more sophisticated and lethal network of our own with an aggressive offensive cyber-capability and probably a new cyber-force; more production of stealthy unmanned vehicles as well as the ability to detect enemy drones more effectively; and special forces who train to counter enemy teams.

The U.S. needs to be mindful that despite our trillions of dollars invested in the traditional nuclear triad, we will need to quickly develop new defensive systems to defeat these capabilities and the creation of our own new triad for deterrence. Strategic deterrence in the traditional sense will continue to matter for some time to come, but we delay at our peril in preparing to deal with this new triad—the burning oil fields of Saudi Arabia are a lesson we cannot ignore. ◻

HISTORY

This revolution has legs

For people who wear skirts and dresses, the start of fall means it's tights season. But when tights first became a wardrobe staple, they signified something bigger than a change in the weather: freedom.

History books credit Allen Gant Sr. with creating pantyhose (or "Panti-Legs") in 1959, inspired by his wife's discomfort with the era's restrictive undergarments. But it wasn't until the mid-'60s that tights took off—paired with a miniskirt, in the fashion of models like Twiggy. The young women who partook in what the Boston *Globe* called "The Great Underwear Revolution" often rejected the expectation that they'd go straight from childhood into a grownup life as girdle-wearing wives and mothers. Their wardrobes reflected that embrace of adolescence. "Tights, as much as the mini, were a gesture of freedom and one that pointed toward youthfulness," says Moya Luckett, co-editor of *Swinging Single: Representing Sexuality in the 1960s.*

By wearing tights, women communicated—and created—their new reality. *—Marlen Komar*

Komar writes about the history of fashion and beauty

Nation

‘I would like you to do us a favor…’

TRUMP BUTTONHOLES UKRAINE AND TRIGGERS AN IMPEACHMENT INQUIRY

By Molly Ball

Trump arrives at a news conference in New York City on Sept. 25, hours after the release of a summary of his call with Ukraine's President

PHOTOGRAPH BY SAUL LOEB

Abigail Spanberger didn't go to Washington to impeach the President.

Over the course of her first nine months in Congress, she said so over and over. She was there to serve her constituents near Richmond, Va., who wanted safe streets and health care and good-paying jobs. As her colleagues ranted about Russia and racism, she kept saying she was focused elsewhere—until Donald Trump did something she felt she couldn't ignore.

Spanberger, a former CIA officer, was elected as a Democrat last November to represent a House district that went for Trump by a 7-point margin in 2016. Supporting impeachment could hurt her image as a moderate more focused on getting things done than on partisan crusades, and put her re-election at risk. But on Sept. 23, she joined other centrist colleagues and, for the first time, endorsed impeachment proceedings after a whistle-blower reportedly complained that the President had pressured a foreign leader to investigate one of Trump's top rivals in the 2020 election. "It wasn't that my mind was changed, it's that we were presented with new information," Spanberger told TIME as she cut across the Capitol lawn the next day.

That information helped change House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's carefully calibrated position on impeachment. Though she leads a Democratic majority elected in part as a check on the President, Pelosi spent months tamping down impeachment talk expressly to protect members like Spanberger. But as details emerged about Trump's conversations with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, long-wavering Democrats made the decision for her. At least 60 new Democrats in the House have announced their support for an impeachment inquiry since Sept. 23, bringing the number to over 200, or roughly 90% of the caucus. The question was no longer whether the impeachment process would begin, but how.

And so, on Sept. 24, Pelosi finally made her move. Trump's actions were a "betrayal of his oath of office, betrayal of our national security and betrayal of the integrity of our elections," Pelosi said in a brief televised address from her offices in the Capitol. "Therefore, today I'm announcing the House of Representatives is moving forward with an official impeachment inquiry."

The accusation Trump faces is grave. The President allegedly pressured Zelensky to reopen investigations into previously dismissed and widely debunked accusations involving Joe Biden, the former Vice President. Before making the call, Trump took extraordinary steps to withhold aid approved for Ukraine by majorities of both parties in Congress. These and other actions by Trump so alarmed an intelligence-community official detailed to the White House that the official filed a whistle-blower complaint. By law, the complaint would be forwarded to Congress. The Administration blocked it.

If the accusations are true, Trump's behavior would be an abuse of power unseen since the Nixon era: using the presidency and the powers of the U.S. government to conscript foreign help in a domestic political campaign. "These allegations are stunning, both in the national-security threat they pose and the potential corruption they represent," Spanberger and six other Democratic freshman members wrote in an op-ed in the Washington *Post*.

The implications go beyond the fate of a presidency to the heart of our democracy. Trump stands accused of using

America's vast wealth and the presidency's unmatched sway to hold onto power for himself. In this era of hyperpartisan politics, the impeachment process will test the mechanisms of accountability built into our system of government by the Founders, who anticipated many things—but could not have envisioned Trump.

The President, for his part, responded to the House's action with characteristic fury, denying wrongdoing and accusing his critics of "presidential harassment." Trump was in New York City for the meeting of the U.N. General Assembly when the dam broke. Speaking to reporters on his way to a meeting with the President of Iraq, he said, "Listen, it's just a continuation of the witch hunt." In shifting statements as the Ukraine story unfolded, Trump has offered different

Pelosi announced a formal impeachment inquiry on Sept. 24

rationales for the withheld aid but insisted there was no quid pro quo. His allies have sought to reframe the scandal as a "deep state" plot by hysterical Trump antagonists, and to deflect attention from the allegations of corruption by the Bidens, which numerous independent observers have determined to be unfounded, the Ukrainian government has denied and Biden decries as a smear.

What is about to unfold is more than political drama. Presidents have been impeached or threatened with impeachment before, but never in the heat of a re-election campaign. (Presidents Nixon and Clinton were in their second terms when they faced impeachment; Andrew Johnson, impeached but not convicted in the 1860s, was never elected to the office.) Now Pelosi and the Democrats have staked the course of history on an constitutional clash, one that threatens to put a deeply divided nation to a new test.

THE PRESIDENT WANTED a favor. "We do a lot for Ukraine," Trump told Zelensky on July 25, according to a declassified summary. "I wouldn't say that's reciprocal." So Trump requested that his Ukrainian counterpart work with Attorney General William Barr and his personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani on the investigation into the origins of the Russian election probe, and help Barr look into work Biden undertook in Ukraine as Vice President.

At least a week before the call, the U.S. had frozen nearly $400 million in aid allocated to Ukraine by Congress, reportedly at Trump's direction. The declassified summary of the call does not include an explicit threat to continue withholding the aid if Zelensky's government did not pursue the investigation, and the Ukrainian government has denied that they were pressured in that way.

But Trump's Democratic critics, and some worried Administration officials, view the exchange as a shakedown. "It didn't have to be explicit," says one senior U.S. official. Trump was reminding Zelensky, the senior official says, how much Ukraine depended on U.S. aid, military assistance and loan guarantees, and then repeatedly expressing his interest in the unproven corruption claim tied to the business connections of Hunter Biden, Joe Biden's son. Whether he felt squeezed or not, Zelensky promised to meet with Giuliani as soon as the former New York mayor came to Ukraine.

At least one person privy to the conversation found the request to be part of an alarming pattern of behavior, and blew the whistle. When a member of the intelligence community sees an urgent national-security concern, there is a protocol to follow, established by Republicans and Democrats in Congress and the Executive Branch. The whistle-blower, whose identity has not been disclosed, went through those channels, lodging a complaint with the inspector general of the intelligence community on Aug. 12. The inspector general, charged with vetting such highly sensitive matters, examined the complaint and found it to be both credible and a matter of "urgent concern."

The complaint was then forwarded to the acting Director of National Intelligence, Joseph Maguire. Federal statutes require the DNI to forward credible whistle-blower complaints to the intelligence committees in Congress. When Maguire did not do so within seven days, the inspector general alerted the committees to its existence. After an internal battle, the White House backed down and provided the complaint on Sept. 25 as this story was going to press.

But the substance of the whistle-blower's allegation soon began to trickle

OPENING PAGES: AFP/GETTY IMAGES; THESE PAGES: ALEX WONG—GETTY IMAGES

out in news reports. Trump denied that he improperly pressured Zelensky to investigate a political opponent, insisting there was no explicit quid pro quo linking the aid to the Biden investigation. But he acknowledged that he raised the issue: the conversation, Trump said on Sept. 22, centered on "the fact that we don't want our people like Vice President Biden and his son creating to the corruption already in the Ukraine."

Giuliani has been trying for months to push the Biden-Ukraine story in the U.S. press, to little avail. The President's lawyer contends that Biden did something eerily similar to what Trump is now accused of: threatening to withhold American aid in order to pressure the previous Ukrainian government to fire its top prosecutor, an office similar to the U.S. Attorney General. Giuliani alleges that Biden was trying to head off the prosecutor's investigation into a Ukrainian gas company for which his son Hunter worked as an adviser.

There's no proof that's the case, and plenty of evidence that it isn't. Hunter Biden served until this year on the board of Burisma, a private energy firm that the Ukrainian government investigated for corruption. Hunter Biden was never a focus of the Burisma investigation, which was no longer active at the time of his father's 2016 push to fire the prosecutor, a career U.S. diplomat familiar with the issue tells TIME.

Moreover, Vice President Biden's efforts were part of a broad reform agenda by the Obama Administration and its allies aimed at a prosecutor they saw as corrupt and ineffectual. The U.S. was not alone in pressing the previous Ukrainian President to fire the prosecutor, says the diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "So did the Brits and the IMF and many others."

Zelensky, a former comedian who won his office in April by campaigning against corruption and Russian influence, inherited the controversy and wants no part in it, his former adviser Serhiy Leshchenko tells TIME. "It's like he stumbled into some strangers' wedding. The groom's family and the bride's family are both dragging him onto the dance floor. But he doesn't want to dance," Leshchenko says. "Please just leave us out of it." Asked by TIME about the July 25 call with Trump, a Zelensky aide who was on it at the time would only confirm the accuracy of the account released by the White House.

Speaking near his home in Wilmington, Del., on Sept. 24, Biden denounced Trump's effort to push the story as a smear. "Pursuing the leader of another nation to investigate a political opponent, to help win his election, is not the conduct of an American President," he said. "It's an abuse of power. It undermines our national security. It violates his oath of office. And it strikes at the heart of the sworn responsibility that the President has to put the national interest before personal interest."

THE STAKES GO BEYOND the 2020 election and to the balance of power in the conduct of America's national security. Congress, with its constitutional power of the purse, decided it was in U.S. interests to send nearly $400 million in aid to Ukraine, which was invaded by Vladimir Putin's Russia in 2014, sparking a war that has so far killed more than 13,000 people. "There is an appearance of the President holding back congressionally appropriated and authorized aid to Ukraine without telling the Congress that the Administration wanted to use it as leverage to persuade Ukraine to open an investigation on one or more U.S. persons," says a top U.S. intelligence adviser.

Moreover, foreign policy and constitutional experts say, whether Trump actually got anything in return misses the point. Making a request for a politically motivated investigation is dangerous on its own. "It is an invitation for other countries to meddle in U.S. elections if they want to help President Trump," says Steven Pifer, a former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine. That invitation puts America's security at risk by making it secondary to the President's political goals, and corrupts American democracy by giving foreign regimes the opportunity to influence U.S. elections.

As for whether that would be an impeachable offense, the Constitution allows Congress to impeach and remove federal officials for bribery, treason or "high crimes and misdemeanors." U.S. laws against bribery abroad are aimed at businesses greasing the palms of corrupt foreign officials; they're less equipped to grapple with a President using the power of his office as his currency. Critics say that what Trump is accused of is graver than violating a mere statute. "It undermines the entire structure of our constitutional republic if the Executive Branch is allowed to do that," says Asha Rangappa, a Yale lecturer and former FBI special agent.

Zelensky and Trump at the U.N. General Assembly on Sept. 25

SAUL LOEB—AFP/GETTY IMAGES

It has been a long time since politics truly stopped at the water's edge. Previous Presidents have twisted national security to suit their political purposes. The Johnson Administration distorted the Gulf of Tonkin attacks that drew the U.S. deeper into Vietnam, and George W. Bush made false claims about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. But even those grievous episodes primarily served a Commander in Chief's national-security agenda, not his political goals.

There has been such sustained chaos throughout Trump's term that it can be hard to determine which outcries to worry about and which to ignore. To the President's critics, a dispute over a weather map is a symptom of the rule of law under siege; even if they're right, the layperson could be forgiven for becoming numb to the constant drumbeat

of outrage. A special counsel spent two years meticulously documenting a presidential campaign receptive to assistance from a foreign adversary and a President who may have used his office to block the investigation. In the end, the result was a collective yawn.

But the Ukraine affair has caused something to snap, and not merely because Trump has supplied enough final straws to fill a hayloft. Unlike the Russia controversy investigated by Robert Mueller, it took place entirely while Trump was in office. It affects national security in the present, not the past, and bears on an election yet to take place. It is, compared with the Mueller probe, relatively easy to understand. Perhaps most significant, for Democratic members of Congress it appears to have been born out of Trump's sense of impunity. Having escaped Mueller's net and dodged congressional oversight, critics say, Trump apparently believed he could get away with anything—and immediately set out to solicit a foreign power to involve itself in his next election. He made his call to Zelensky the day after Mueller testified before Congress.

NOW EVEN MANY reluctant House Democrats have concluded they have no choice but to begin an impeachment inquiry. "To

VIEWPOINT

An impeachment inquiry is necessary

By David French

The unredacted, declassified summary of Donald Trump's July 25 telephone call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky contains an express request that he work with Trump's personal attorney Rudy Giuliani, and it creates a powerful inference tying this request to the Ukrainian need for American Javelin missiles to assist in deterring Russian aggression.

The sequence in the call is damning. First, in the opening moments of the call—just after Trump congratulates Zelensky on his election victory—he raises direct concerns that while the U.S. has been "very very good to Ukraine," the nation not been "reciprocal necessarily" with the U.S.

There is nothing wrong in the abstract with a statement like this. Nations do seek quid pro quos all the time in international diplomacy. The relevant question is what the U.S. wants for its friendship.

That's why the next paragraphs are so very crucial. Zelensky specifically thanks Trump for his "great support" in the area of defense and then specifically notes that Ukraine is "almost ready to buy" additional antitank missiles. These missiles are vitally important to Ukraine's efforts to blunt Russia's overwhelming military advantage by substantially raising the potential cost of further Russian action.

How does Trump respond? The very next words out of his mouth are, "I would like you to do us a favor though …" The first thing he outlines is Ukrainian assistance in what appears to be continued investigation of the 2016 election. Trump says, "I would like you to find out what happened with this whole situation with Ukraine" and references CrowdStrike, the firm involved in investigating cyberattacks on Democratic National Committee computer servers.

Zelensky responds with "yes," saying the matter is "very important" to him. In the next paragraph, Trump goes further. He indicates that he would like Giuliani to call Zelensky, and asks Zelensky to talk to him. Then we get the key words. Trump says, "The other thing, there's a lot of talk about Biden's son, that Biden stopped the prosecution and a lot of people want to find out about that so whatever you can do with the Attorney General would be great." Trump continues, "Biden went around bragging that he stopped the prosecution so if you can look into it … It sounds horrible to me."

A fact-check is in order. Former Vice President Biden has boasted of his role in compelling Ukraine to fire its former chief prosecutor, but there is no evidence that Biden stopped any prosecution of his son Hunter. In fact, Biden was not only advancing Obama Administration policy, he was expressing the desires of key European Union allies. Yes, Biden was a poor messenger. Yes, his son's business dealings in Ukraine created a conflict of interest. But there's no evidence that Biden saved his son from prosecution.

Zelensky responds to Trump by assuring him that the next prosecutor will be "100% my person, my candidate," and promises that "he or she will look into the situation."

Paragraph by paragraph, the context unfolds. Trump complained about a lack of reciprocity in the relationship with Ukraine. Zelensky asks for missiles vital to his national defense. Trump asks Zelensky for additional investigation of matters related to the 2016 election, and Zelensky agrees. Trump then asks for Zelensky to talk to Trump's personal attorney and investigate his political rival. Zelensky agrees.

Crucially this conversation occurred after Trump reportedly intervened to place a hold on military aid to Ukraine.

It's entirely unacceptable that a President would ask a foreign leader to work with personal counsel to investigate an American rival. These facts were plain before the summary was released. But now the summary raises serious questions abut Trump's repeated denial of any "quid pro quo" with Ukraine.

When Trump demanded reciprocity, he made it clear what reciprocity meant, and it meant in part an investigation of a leading Democratic candidate for President. Under these facts, an impeachment inquiry is an entirely appropriate response.

French is a TIME columnist and a senior writer at the National Review

me," says Dean Phillips, a moderate freshman Congressman from Minnesota who came out for impeachment on Sept. 23, Trump's behavior "was so egregious and beyond the pale, and so cut and dried, that there was no alternative."

The White House denounced impeachment proceedings as baseless. The Democrats' "attacks on the President and his agenda are not only partisan and pathetic, they are in dereliction of their constitutional duty," White House press secretary Stephanie Grisham said. The President's political team predicts he will benefit from the fight. "Democrats have wanted to overturn the legitimate results of the 2016 election ever since President Trump was elected," says Tim Murtaugh, the Trump campaign's director of communications. "They've always wanted to impeach him, and they've just been shopping around for an excuse."

Plenty of Democrats remain wary of the politics. "There's definitely a feeling that people are rushing into it before they've gotten all the necessary information," says a House Democrat who has not called for an impeachment inquiry. "I don't take away from anyone else who's arrived at the decision that they've arrived at. But they don't hold an ethical high ground on this. It is a perfectly rational, perfectly ethical decision to say, 'I'm going to wait and hear out the facts.'"

Pelosi's announcement signaled an official imprimatur more than any material change to the congressional investigations that are already looking at the President's financial dealings and building a public case around alleged corruption. The Constitution leaves it up to Congress to make its own way on impeachment. In the past, the House first voted to move forward with the impeachment process.

WHAT IS CERTAIN is that the President is about to be put on trial in a whole new way. The Democrats' investigations have taken on a heightened level of seriousness, visibility and focus. If the allegations are firmly supported by evidence, articles of impeachment will be drawn up and put to a vote of the Democratic-controlled House. A majority vote sends them to the Republican-controlled Senate, where the two-thirds bar for conviction and removal has always proven prohibitively high. (In 1868, President Johnson escaped conviction by a single vote.) Trump has assumed Republicans will stand by his side to the bitter end, and that has been the case so far. Most GOP Senators who spoke to TIME said they considered the Ukraine allegations mere hearsay, or tried to change the subject to insinuations about Biden.

But impeachment proponents predict things could be different once Republicans are under pressure to take a side, with history (and swing-state voters) watching. Senator Mitt Romney of Utah has said Trump's alleged actions would be "deeply troubling" if they took place. On Sept. 24, the Senate called for the release of the whistle-blower complaint in a unanimous, bipartisan vote.

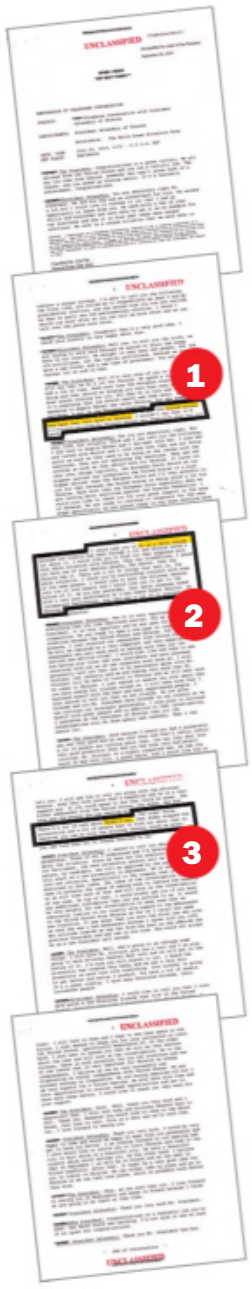
For months, the sense in Washington has been that impeachment would be a political loser for the Democrats, but that conventional wisdom seems to be bending too. GOP strategist Brendan Buck says he now believes a corruption-focused impeachment proceeding has the potential to damage Trump politically, if Democrats "focus on this simple-to-understand transgression: the President [allegedly] sought assistance from a foreign leader to affect our election."

The process is likely to drag on into the heat of a fiercely competitive Democratic presidential primary. Iowa and New Hampshire will cast the first votes in February. Biden's campaign hopes the scandal will cause voters to rally around the well-liked former veep. But some advisers worry it could damage him by putting "Biden" and "corruption" in the headlines, sowing doubts among voters.

For Spanberger, the time has come to pursue the truth, whatever the politics may be. "I believe that my voters elected me because they thought that I would lead with integrity," she tells TIME as the sun sets over the Capitol. "I think anybody, regardless of party, should want to get to the bottom of these allegations." —*With reporting by* CHARLOTTE ALTER/NEW YORK; SIMON SHUSTER/BERLIN; *and* ALANA ABRAMSON, BRIAN BENNETT, TESSA BERENSON, VERA BERGENGRUEN, PHILIP ELLIOTT, LISSANDRA VILLA *and* JOHN WALCOTT/WASHINGTON

The Ukraine call

During a 30-minute call on July 25, President Trump asked Ukraine's leader Volodymyr Zelensky to help U.S. Attorney General Bill Barr investigate Joe Biden. He also wanted Zelensky to help Barr and Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani look into the origins of the investigation into Russian election interference. Below are excerpts from Trump's side of the call, according to the White House summary that Trump ordered declassified.



1. "The **United States has been very very good to Ukraine.** I wouldn't say that it's reciprocal necessarily because things are happening that are not good."

2. "I would like you to **do us a favor though** because our country has been through a lot and Ukraine knows a lot about it … I would like to have the Attorney General call you or your people and I would like you to get to the bottom of it. As you saw yesterday, that whole nonsense ended with a very poor performance by a man named Robert Mueller, an incompetent performance, but they say a lot of it started with Ukraine."

3. "The other thing, there's a lot of talk about **Biden's son,** that Biden stopped the prosecution and a lot of people want to find out about that so whatever you can do with the Attorney General would be great."

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Trudeau faces another major scandal as he seeks re-election on Oct. 21

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEFAN RUIZ FOR TIME

World

Identity Crisis

Justin Trudeau has been a liberal icon for years. But are his days numbered?

By Ian Bremmer

IT'S BEEN 84 YEARS SINCE A FIRST-TERM Canadian Prime Minister with a parliamentary majority lost a bid for re-election, but Justin Trudeau was in a position to shatter that record even before those photos hit the Internet. Blackface is a bad look for any candidate, but it's especially unbecoming for an incumbent who has built his political brand on inclusion, immigration, multiculturalism and a liberal global order.

Trudeau now finds himself defending not just the record of his four years in office but also his personal sincerity, all while fending off a Conservative challenger who is smart, likable, polished and even younger than he is. How seriously can anyone take his impassioned speeches about diversity now?

"Actions speak louder than words," Trudeau told me, in a follow-up to an exclusive interview with TIME. "I know that my actions in the past have been hurtful to people, and for that I'm deeply sorry. Our government has acted to fight discrimination and racism consistently over our first term, and if we earn the right to govern Canada again, we'll move forward to fight racism and discrimination in our next term."

I sat down with Trudeau on Sept. 3 in his Parliament office, 15 days before TIME published on its website what would prove to be only the first photograph of the leader of the Liberal Party in brown- or blackface. That one was taken at age 29, at a costume party at the Vancouver private school where he was teaching *(see page 34)*. Within hours two more images had popped up from high school, and the Prime Minister was in the midst of a full-on media storm.

Polls taken in the days afterward showed scant change in Canadians' assessment of their Prime Minister, or at least of the party he leads: the Liberals

STEFAN RUIZ FOR TIME

continue to trail the Conservatives within the margin of error. By the time we spoke again, on Sept. 23, the world's attention had largely moved on, to the attack on Saudi Arabia's oil infrastructure, and to Donald Trump's phone call to Ukraine. The world's leaders were gathering in New York City for the U.N. General Assembly, and it seemed at least possible that the essential variable facing Canada's battered Premier was, once again, a global order that shows every sign of moving away from him. Trudeau, the unapologetic globalist in a populist world, has work to do.

FOUR YEARS AGO, the firstborn son of Pierre Trudeau—the cosmopolitan leftist who served nearly 16 years as Prime Minister—burst onto the global stage looking every inch the scion of a resurgent liberalism. Trudeau's party entered the campaign in third place, but when the votes were counted the Liberals had moved in one election from 36 to 184 seats in Parliament, the largest surge in Canada's federal history. Barack Obama was the leader of the free world, and Trudeau's first visit to Washington had a glow of a torch being passed. The young children of the Prime Minister and his wife, the former television host Sophie Grégoire, scampered on the steps of Blair House. In the Rose Garden, the Prime Minister quoted JFK.

That's all history. These days when Trudeau strides onstage to greet the leaders of other advanced industrialized democracies, he's shaking hands with a Brexiteer British Prime Minister, a technocrat struggling to lead an Italy under the sway of a populist protest party, a German Chancellor in decline and a French President cornered by strikes and protests back home. Canada's "special friend" is now Trump, a U.S. President with kind words for autocrats like China's Xi Jinping, Russia's Vladimir Putin and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. In the name of principle, Trudeau's government has run afoul of the last two, with repercussions for both diplomacy and the Canadian economy.

When greeting voters, he's still the Sunny Delight candidate, the charismatic political natural born on Christmas Day, 1971. (Not the ideal birthday, he admits.) And as we sat down for our initial interview in Ottawa, Trudeau was smiling and seemed genuinely eager to talk. But it's easy to see that four years in power have taken a toll. He's made his share of mistakes in office, including a political-influence scandal that deeply stained his reputation for openness. An August tracking poll from Angus Reid Institute set his approval rating at 31% and disapproval at 61%.

Trudeau's Conservative opponent, Andrew Scheer, 40, often polls even with or at times better than the incumbent. The conventional wisdom holds that even if the Liberals prevail, it will be with less than the majority they have enjoyed since 2015, and Trudeau will end up governing through a coalition. In the Ottawa interview, Trudeau was upbeat and said his message would be too, come what may. "We know attack ads work," he said, but "if you get elected

Trudeau in the Prime Minister's office in Ottawa on Sept. 3

through negativity and through division, it's really difficult to then govern responsibly for everyone once you've gone and divided people." It's clear that optimism remains central to his appeal.

"The fact of the matter is that I've always—and you'll know this—been more enthusiastic about costumes than is sometimes appropriate," Trudeau told reporters on his campaign plane. The "you'll know this" part took in not the instances of brownface or blackface that had just become known, but scenes like a February state visit to India, where the entire family appeared in Indian garb.

At the time, the frequent costume changes drew quips about showboating, and the line between appreciating a culture and appropriating it. "FYI, we Indians don't dress like this every day sir, not even in Bollywood," tweeted a Kashmiri politician.

TRUDEAU'S OPTIMISM HAS helped make him one of the few remaining advocates on the world stage for the global world order that seemed so certain until recently. He remains an unapologetic supporter of free trade, immigration, diversity, human rights—all the causes that have been challenged by nationalist populism elsewhere, including south of the world's longest undefended border.

Trump's election was both a challenge and an opportunity for Trudeau. The challenge was obvious: Trump had campaigned against NAFTA, the trade treaty on which Canada had built much of its economy. His first trip abroad was not the traditional jaunt to America's neighbor to the north, but to Saudi Arabia, to wave swords with kings. When Trump cited "national security" to justify tariffs on Canadian steel, an indignant Trudeau cited the casualties Canadians had taken fighting in Afghanistan. And when Canada hosted the G-7 in June 2018, Trump ruined the finale by withdrawing from a joint communiqué, after taking offense at Trudeau's description of it at a news conference.

At the same time, Canada under Trudeau assumed the image of a country intent on proclaiming ideals the new U.S. President declined to articulate, much less embrace. While Trump built his campaign on the promise of a border wall with Mexico and sharply reduced the number of refugees allowed into the U.S., Trudeau went to the airport to welcome asylum seekers. "You are safe at home now," he told Syrians who had fled the war. U.S. tech giants opened offices in Vancouver, where visas for foreign workers were easier to come by.

"My focus is on how to make sure that Canada does well in the 21st century," Trudeau says, framing the issue in terms of both compassion and competitiveness. "We need to be bringing in people from around the world. We need immigration and, yes, part of that is accepting refugees."

The numbers show the commitment. In 2018, Canada, a nation of just 37 million, accepted more refugees than the U.S., a country of 327 million. But some of this, Trudeau claims, is driven by self-interest. "Understanding that there are

60 or 70 million displaced people around the world right now [who are] global refugees is a reality, and Canada has an opportunity not just to do its part, but to benefit, the way we have over successive generations." He argues that a welcome mat isn't enough. Government must ensure that immigrants are integrated. "We are investing in the integration and support of new arrivals, so that they can contribute as quick as possible," he told me.

In proportional terms, Canada is more of an immigrant nation than the U.S. Nearly 22% of Canadians were born in another country vs. 13.7% in the U.S. But Trudeau acknowledges the unease created by the impression of a wide-open door. Over the past couple of years, tens of thousands of people have walked across the Canada-U.S. border to make asylum claims that would allow them to live and work in Canada. "There is anxiety around [the immigration policy]," Trudeau admits, but he insists that "we have a strong immigration system, and the rules continue to apply. Security continues to be of concern, and no shortcuts are taken."

Some in the Conservative Party criticize Trudeau, even as they defend Canada's more open approach to immigration. Jason Kenney, premier of Alberta province and former Immigration Minister under the Conservative Party government that preceded Trudeau, told me that public opinion against high levels of immigration is rising and that Trudeau's unwillingness to strengthen Canada's border with the U.S. is to blame.

"To preserve broad support for immigration, politicians and the media commentariat need to take seriously growing concerns about breakdowns we've seen in the system," he told me. "Our elites do the cause of legal immigration a great disservice when they minimize, or even ridicule, real public concerns about illegal and irregular migration." Recent polling appears to confirm this view. A survey conducted by Leger found that 63% of respondents said Canada's government should prioritize new limits on immigration because the country might not be able to integrate current numbers.

Trudeau's message on trade is no less unapologetically globalist. He's proud that his government has reached important trade deals, including the revised NAFTA agreement known as USMCA, a pact with the European Union, and the updated Trans-Pacific Partnership abandoned by Trump as soon as he took office. In fact, Canada is the only country that has trade deals with all the other G-7 countries.

"We managed to negotiate three of the biggest trade deals the world has ever seen at a time where we have significant populism and protectionism," Trudeau says. And Trump's inner circle took notice. "When it came to negotiating the [USMCA] trade deal," Jared Kushner told me recently, "Trudeau was tough, fair, smart, and he got the deal done. He knew how to stay focused and get the right deal for his country."

But Trudeau also acknowledges the downside of globalism—chiefly, income inequality: the rich getting richer. It's the topic that got him leaning forward in his seat. "We put more money in the pockets of the families who need it," he said proudly, "with a child benefit that has lifted 300,000 kids out of poverty and made a huge difference, hundreds of dollars a month tax-free in the lives of middle-class families."

"We made a very different choice than the American Administration did: they lowered taxes for millionaires and billionaires, we raised taxes on them. We don't think that it is sustainable, the model the United States has. They're increasing debt."

He's not finished. "Tax breaks to the wealthy, the advantages to big business are, in the medium term, going to be deeply harmful to our global economy. We need businesses to succeed. Yes, we need to be competitive, but if we do not ensure that ordinary citizens feel that their kids have an opportunity to succeed, then we're going to see more and more breakdowns of our political systems. More and more excessive nationalism, extreme populism."

IN SOME CASES, Trudeau has company. In particular, the U.S. is the outlier on climate action. In August, the Trump Administration rolled back emissions rules on methane—a chemical more than 80 times as potent as carbon dioxide in trapping heat in the earth's atmosphere—from pipeline wells and storage tanks.

JOHN WOODS—GETTY IMAGES

Trudeau holds his second press conference in two days, on Sept. 19 in Winnipeg, to apologize for racist costumes

"We know reduction of methane emissions is going to be extremely important in the future that our kids and grandkids are going to have," Trudeau told me. "That becomes a value that, when the U.S. finally does wake up and realize, 'Oh, we need to do those sorts of things.' Well, we will have solutions to share with them."

A cynic would point out that Canada will benefit in many ways from the warming of temperatures in the country's far north. It will gain access to new resources now buried beneath ice. New shipping lanes will become available. More of Canada's land will be available for farming. But Trudeau insists on a different kind of forecast, and he describes it in terms only an unreconstructed globalist will appreciate. "If Canada can use the benefits we have from having energy and natural resources now, maximize our return on those while the world needs them, and prepare for the next solutions, and use our brilliant energy thinkers, scientists, researchers and workers to build that future, then we will not just be benefiting Canada, but … the world with those solutions."

But it's on human rights that his progressive voice becomes most obvious. "We had folks on the right end of the spectrum in Canada saying, 'What are you doing putting in women's rights and environmental rights into [the updated NAFTA] trade deal? It's about business, it's about the economy.' And now, those are the very elements that are increasing the likelihood that the deal gets passed by [U.S.] Democrats who are worried about labor standards and environmental issues. Of course, Democrats have not yet ratified that deal. They may not even put it to a vote until after next year's U.S. election."

AS TRUDEAU'S CRITICS fairly point out, while insistence on labor, environmental and gender-fairness standards may not kill a deal made with Europe or the U.S., it's put Canada on the back foot with China, a commercial partner that Trudeau acknowledges is crucial for Canada's future. Canada risked the wrath of China by detaining, at the request of U.S. officials, Meng Wanzhou, a senior executive at Chinese tech giant Huawei who lives much of the year in Canada, on fraud charges. China then arrested two Canadians, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor, on charges of espionage.

Trudeau says he doesn't want to escalate this fight—China is Canada's second largest trade partner—but his opinion of China's behavior is clear: "We need to figure out ways to benefit Canadian businesses, Canadian workers, Canadian suppliers, all those sorts of things. But we've also always known that China has a very different political system, value set, approach to the world and to trade than we do. Right now the arbitrary detention of two Canadians for political reasons by the Chinese is something that is the biggest thing that we are focused on in our relationship, and it's put a hold on a lot of other things."

Trudeau has faced a similar trade-off with Saudi Arabia. In August 2018, Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland tweeted her grave concern over Saudi arrests of several social- and women's-rights activists; one of those arrested was the sister of a Saudi dissident married to a Canadian citizen. The Saudi response was swift: Canada needs to fix its big mistake. The Saudis then expelled Canada's ambassador from the kingdom and suspended all new trade with Canada.

Following the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Trudeau again went on the offensive in calling Saudi authorities to account. Trudeau and Canada have little to show for these confrontations, and he has also frustrated supporters of his approach by having not yet ended a controversial $11.3 billion Saudi arms deal.

In the end, the election may swing on how a self-proclaimed idealist navigates the exigencies of political office. As Trudeau said, "Actions speak louder than words." And the scandal that redefined Trudeau unfolded months ago.

SNC-Lavalin is a world-class engineering firm based in the politically crucial province of Quebec. In 2015, Canadian authorities charged the company with attempts to bribe officials in Libya, including member's of Muammar Gaddafi's family, and to defraud Libyan companies of more than $100 million. The *Globe and Mail* newspaper then published a report that Trudeau had made a "consistent and sustained" effort to convince his former Justice Minister that taking the company to trial would cost Canadians jobs, and their party votes.

The first scandal led to the resignation of two Ministers and Trudeau's most trusted aide. In August, Canada's ethics commissioner said Trudeau had used his office "to circumvent, undermine and ultimately attempt to discredit" his Justice Minister. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police says it's examining the case "carefully."

As are voters. Challenger Scheer "has been underestimated at every point in his career," says John Baird, Canada's Foreign Minister under the Conservative government that preceded Trudeau's. "But Trudeau was running in third place before coming back to win four years ago." The question is whether Canadians are seeing the candidate they saw then.

If he does eke out a victory next month, he'll cut a lonely figure on the international stage for some time to come.

Bremmer, a TIME contributing editor, is the president of Eurasia Group and GZERO Media, and host of GZERO WORLD *on U.S. public television*

WORLD

The story behind a photo that roiled an election

By Anna Purna Kambhampaty

ON SEPT. 18, *TIME* PUBLISHED A PREVIOUSLY UNREPORTED yearbook photo that showed Justin Trudeau wearing brownface at a 2001 "Arabian Nights"–themed party for the private school where he taught.

Less than two hours later, the Canadian Prime Minister, who is in the middle of a close re-election campaign, addressed TV cameras and apologized. "I shouldn't have done that. I should have known better but I didn't, and I'm really sorry," Trudeau said.

He also acknowledged wearing blackface in high school to sing "Day-O," a Jamaican folk song famously performed by singer and civil rights activist Harry Belafonte. The next morning, a third instance emerged: a grainy video obtained by Global News showed Trudeau in blackface, raising his hands in the air while sticking out his tongue. Later that day, Trudeau apologized again and said he couldn't rule out even more photos emerging. He acknowledged that wearing blackface was racist at the time, "and I didn't see that from the layers of privilege that I have."

Trudeau appears in brownface at a 2001 "Arabian Nights"–themed party at the private school where he taught

THE REVELATION FROM *TIME* drew immediate criticism from his political opponents, with Conservative Party leader Andrew Scheer calling it an act of "open mockery and racism," implying that Trudeau was "not fit to govern this country." Jagmeet Singh, the leader of Canada's New Democratic Party, which is politically to the left of Trudeau's Liberal Party, said, "Anytime we hear examples of brownface or blackfacing, it's really making a mockery of someone for what they live and what their lived experiences are. I think he needs to answer for it."

Cheryl Thompson, a professor who studies the history of blackface at Ryerson University in Toronto, says Trudeau's blackface controversy could be "one of the first times we've had an honest conversation about race in Canada." Trudeau, who is often described as the "first Prime Minister of the Instagram age," now stands accused of hypocrisy because of his past record of championing diversity. Along with appointing a Cabinet with at least seven of 35 members from a racial minority, Trudeau's government has welcomed more than 25,000 refugees from Syria and put Canadian civil rights activist Viola Desmond on the $10 bill.

Thompson says the shock these images caused comes from a "cognitive dissonance that's hard for people to grapple with." She adds, "We have this illusion that racism does not exist in Canada, but that's not the case. We have been reluctant to accept our own history."

Canada may not have the same history of slavery and Jim Crow racism as the U.S., but that doesn't make black- or brownface any less racist there, says Philip S.S. Howard, a professor and black-studies scholar at McGill University in Montreal.

Blackface was used in performances to dehumanize people of color in Canada, just as it was in the U.S., according to Howard. It was popular at community events in Canada until the 1970s, and the national anthem, "O Canada," was composed by Calixa Lavallée, who spent years performing in blackface for minstrel shows.

The photo shows then 29-year-old Trudeau, the son of a former Prime Minister, wearing a turban and robes with his face, neck and hands completely darkened, smiling alongside other faculty members. It was published in a yearbook for West Point Grey Academy. The photo was obtained by TIME from Michael Adamson, a Vancouver businessman who had been part of the West Point Grey Academy community.

The controversy comes at an especially delicate time for Trudeau, with Canadians voting on Oct. 21. He was already weathering a scandal over whether he had pressured his then Justice Minister to drop corruption charges against a large Canadian engineering firm—and he had been polling neck and neck with his Conservative Party rival.

Polls immediately after the photo was published showed Trudeau's Liberal Party hadn't lost any significant support. A different poll by EKOS Research, however, found nearly a quarter of Canadians said that the blackface incidents will impact how they vote. ◻

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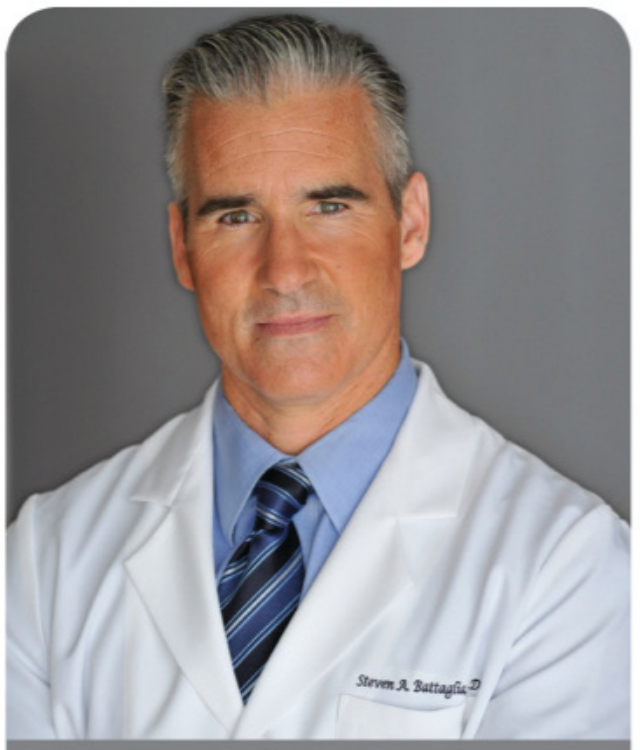

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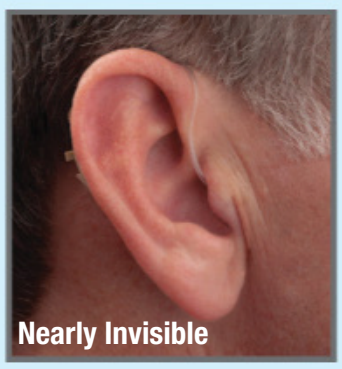

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The Global War on Truth

HOW RUSSIA'S INFORMATION WAR STARTED AND HOW TO STOP IT

BY RICHARD STENGEL

IF THE RUSSIANS HAD TRIED TO FIND A MORE INHOSPITABLE SPACE FOR our meeting, I don't know how they could have succeeded. I was led into a narrow trapezoidal room with one grimy window in a faceless building off Red Square. It was 10 days before the 2016 presidential election, and I was the last State Department official to visit Moscow before the vote. I had been Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy for almost three years, and a big part of my job had been trying to counter the deluge of Russian disinformation that we saw beginning with the invasion of Crimea in 2014. But I was under strict orders from the National Security Council to not bring up Russian disinformation or interference in the U.S. election. No one wanted any hiccups.

The two Russian officials seemed to be channeling Putin: chilly, inhospitable, inflexible. They made no effort to be pleasant—or even diplomatic. I brought up Russian harassment of American diplomats. They shrugged. I brought up the forced closing of American cultural facilities. They shrugged. I did not bring up Russian interference in our election. I wish I had.

I had come to State after being a journalist for many years and the editor of TIME for the previous seven. My job was to help shape America's image in the world—I thought of myself as the chief marketing officer for brand USA. But then a funny thing happened. Within a few weeks of my being on the job in 2014, the Russians invaded and then annexed Crimea, the southernmost peninsula of Ukraine. The largest violation of another nation's sovereignty since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. And Vladimir Putin lied about it—over and over again.

President Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry condemned this willful act of aggression and called for sanctions against Russia. I shared their outrage, but I couldn't impose sanctions or call up troops. What I could do was, well, tweet about it. After all, I was the head of all of State's communications, and I could marshal department messaging against Russia and the invasion. So I decided to tweet on my own, hoping others would follow. Here's the first: "The unshakable principle guiding events must be that the people of #Ukraine determine their own future."

As I started tweeting, I noticed something odd. Within the first few minutes and then for months after, I started getting attacked, often by

ILLUSTRATIONS BY LINCOLN AGNEW FOR TIME

Russian-sounding Twitter handles. A single tweet would get dozens, sometimes hundreds of comments. I soon started getting hundreds of tweets calling me a fascist propagandist, a hypocrite and much, much worse. At the same time, we observed a wave of social media in the Russian periphery supporting the Russian line on Ukraine, accusing the West of being the source of instability, claiming Ukraine was a part of Russia. Who knew that the Russians were so good at this? We didn't realize or even suspect it at the time, but this tsunami of Russian propaganda and disinformation became a kind of test run for what they did here in the 2016 election.

In many ways, these were also the first salvos in the global information war we are living in now. Today, we are all actors in a global information war that is ubiquitous, difficult to comprehend and taking place at the speed of light. When I was at the State Department, there were hundreds of thousands of cyberattacks a day. The Pentagon says it thwarts more than a million malware attacks an hour. About 600,000 Facebook accounts are compromised every day. More than 25 million data records are lost or stolen from businesses each day. And all that doesn't even take into account the rising tide of disinformation, which is impossible to measure.

It is a war without limits and boundaries, and one we still don't know how to fight. Governments, nonstate actors and terrorists are creating their own narratives that have nothing to do with reality. These false narratives undermine our democracy and the ability of free people to make intelligent choices. The disinformationists are aided by the big-platform companies who benefit as much from the sharing of the false as from the true. The bad guys use all the same behavioral and information tools supplied by Facebook, Google and Twitter. Just as Nike buys your information to sell you sneakers, the Russians bought your information to persuade you that America is a mess. Autocrats have learned the same tools once seen as spreading democracy can also undermine it. Studies show that more than a quarter of Americans recall seeing at least one false story leading up to the 2016 election.

SOMETIMES EXPERIENCE can be a barrier to discovery. My very ignorance of how things worked at State helped me launch something new. I had looked around the department and didn't see any entity that could push back against all the Russian disinformation and propaganda around Ukraine and Crimea. I called a meeting of the senior leaders of public diplomacy and public affairs. By coincidence, we had a public-affairs officer visiting from our Kiev embassy. He was a big, bearded burly fellow from the Midwest, and after listening to some of the milquetoast comments, he stood up, banged the table and said, "The Russians have a big engine. They are building a compelling narrative. They repeat the same lies over and over. They don't feel the need to be truthful. We are being outmessaged. We are too timid and reactive."

When he sat down, there was silence. His speech was much more powerful than anything I could have said. But I sought to harness his passion and said, Let's start a counter-Russian information group here at State. I asked for volunteers. Zero hands went up. Then the public-affairs officer said, Count Kiev in. We're in all the way. Others then slowly stepped forward. That day we started what became known as the Ukraine Task Force. It was the first entity in the federal government that sought to reckon with Russian disinformation.

By 2015, we realized that a lot of this Russian disinformation emanated from an anonymous building in St. Petersburg that was the home of a shadowy Russian company called the Internet Research Agency (IRA). The IRA was in fact a troll factory. A few hundred young people entered every morning at precisely 8:55 and spent the day doing everything from tweeting about how corrupt the U.S. was to writing Facebook posts on recipes. The enterprise was owned and financed by an oligarch close to Putin. I actually got hold of a manual—from an open source—that was given to each of the people who worked there. The guide instructs them to each create numerous online personas, sometimes called sock puppets, that look and sound like real people.

What we also saw—which was not written about in the Mueller report—is how the "fake news" from the IRA was complemented by traditional Russian media like RT and the new digital arm Sputnik. The trolls from the IRA would retweet RT and Sputnik stories. Sputnik and RT would pick up some of the false leads from the IRA. And then the Russian Foreign Ministry would give credence to all of it.

But the truth was we were getting outgunned. We estimated that the IRA alone produced a few thousand pieces of social media a day. We were collectively producing a few dozen. Plus, they were buying ads on social media, something we didn't do. The Russian initiative was a whole-of-government effort, so even their public statements were echoed and amplified by the IRA. Our little entity changed its name to the Russian Information Group and mainly began doing research and helping our public-affairs offices around the world. But it became the seed for some-

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thing else. In March 2016, the President signed an Executive Order creating the Global Engagement Center, an interagency group tasked primarily with combatting Russian disinformation.

After the election, I wondered whether we should have done more. Did we see all of this at the time? No. I wish I'd been able to connect the dots faster. There was a lot we missed. But I wish we had made a whole of government effort to tell voters that the Russians were not "meddling" in our election—they were staging an unprecedented attack against the very foundation of our democracy.

SO WHAT should we do now as 2020 approaches?

One thing we know is Russia does not have an "off" switch. Sanctions slow but do not deter it. And as Putin sees a friendly face in the White House, he's going to continue to probe and interfere. So we must assume the Russians are already preparing for 2020.

While the Russians have pioneered election interference, they are no longer alone. In the intelligence world, countries copy what works, and the FBI has already said China and Iran are getting in on the game. Just this year, Facebook and Twitter have taken down hundreds of accounts and handles affiliated with Iran influence operations. China has used online influence to counter the Hong Kong protesters; it's hard to imagine they won't experiment against the U.S.

I came to see firsthand that government was not the answer to fighting disinformation. It's too big, too slow, too siloed and just too averse to creating content itself. It's also not government's job to censor content. The first five words of the First Amendment are "Congress shall make no law…" But that doesn't mean government has no role. Congress should amend the Communications Decency Act of 1996, particularly Section 230. It was that law that declared the platform companies were not publishers and gave them blanket immunity for the content that is on them. This is wrong. They are the largest publishers in the history of the world, and they need to have more accountability for the content they publish.

It's not a mystery what we should do about disinformation. There's a broad consensus around the following: 1) Prohibiting foreign governments, organizations and individuals from buying online advertising to influence U.S. elections; 2) Making the source and buyers of all political advertising transparent, and informing users why they were specifically targeted; 3) Providing more privacy for your data, and moving toward the E.U. policy that citizens own their own information; 4) Removing verifiably and provably false information, including deep fakes; 5) Getting media organizations to collectively agree not to use stolen information from hacks or cybermeddling; 6) Requiring campaigns and officials to disclose any contacts with foreign governments or individuals seeking to influence elections; 7) Appointing a senior federal official, even creating a Cabinet office, to deal with disinformation and election interference.

But ultimately the problem is centered less on government or even platforms than on users; that is, you and me. I've long thought that we don't have a "fake news" problem, we have a media-literacy problem. Millions of people just can't tell the difference between a made-up story and a factual one, and don't know how to do so. This is a long-term problem with a long-term solution: media literacy needs to be taught in elementary school. People need to learn the provenance of information: what is an accepted fact and what is not; what is a trusted source and what is not. At the same time, the media itself must become radically transparent: publish the full text of interviews and reporters' research. That alone will begin to make people more literate about the sources of the information we get.

The Russians bought your information to persuade you that America is a mess

Jefferson said a nation could never be ignorant and free. Governments derive their just power from the consent of the governed. That consent is obtained by the free flow of information. Factual information. That's still an idea worth fighting for.

Adapted from Stengel's forthcoming book, Information Wars: How We Lost the Global Battle Against Disinformation & What We Can Do About It

Society

IT CAN BE A BOY, A GIRL, NEITHER OR BOTH

WITH A GENDER-NEUTRAL DOLL, MATTEL IS HOPING TO BREAK TABOOS AND APPEAL TO A GENERATION THAT DEMANDS SOCIAL JUSTICE IN BRANDS

BY ELIANA DOCKTERMAN/EL SEGUNDO, CALIF.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUCO FOR TIME

A CHILD OPENS A BOX. He starts jumping and screaming with joy—not an unusual sound in the halls of Mattel's headquarters where researchers test new toys. But this particular toy is a doll, and it's rare for parents to bring boys into these research groups to play with dolls. It's rarer still for a boy to immediately attach himself to one the way Shi'a just did.

An 8-year-old who considers himself gender-fluid and whose favorite color is black one week, pink the next, Shi'a sometimes plays with his younger sister's dolls at home, but they're "girly princess stuff," he says dismissively. This doll, with its prepubescent body and childish features, looks more like him, right down to the wave of bleached blond bangs. "The hair is just like mine," Shi'a says, swinging his head in tandem with the doll's. Then he turns to the playmate in the toy-testing room, a 7-year-old girl named Jhase, and asks, "Should I put on the girl hair?" Shi'a fits a long, blond wig on the doll's head, and suddenly it is no longer an avatar for him but for his sister.

The doll can be a boy, a girl, neither or both, and Mattel, which calls this the world's first gender-neutral doll, is hoping its launch on Sept. 25 redefines who gets to play with a toy traditionally deemed taboo for half the world's kids. Carefully manicured features betray no obvious gender: the lips are not too full, the eyelashes not too long and fluttery, the jaw not too wide. There are no Barbie-like breasts or broad, Ken-like shoulders. Each doll in the Creatable World series looks like a slender 7-year-old with short hair, but each comes with a wig of long, lustrous locks and a wardrobe befitting any fashion-conscious kid: hoodies, sneakers, graphic T-shirts in soothing greens and yellows, along with tutus and camo pants.

Mattel's first promotional spot for the $29.99 product features a series of kids who go by various pronouns—him, her, them, xem—and the slogan "A doll line designed to keep labels out and invite everyone in." With this overt nod to trans and nonbinary identities, the company is betting on where it thinks the country is going, even if it means alienating a substantial portion of the population. A Pew Research survey conducted in 2017 showed that while 76% of the public supports parents' steering girls to

Shi'a, left, and Jhase play with Mattel's first gender-neutral doll

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANGIE SMITH FOR TIME

toys and activities traditionally associated with boys, only 64% endorse steering boys toward toys and activities associated with girls.

For years, millennial parents have pushed back against "pink aisles" and "blue aisles" in toy stores in favor of gender-neutral sections, often in the name of exposing girls to the building blocks and chemistry kits that foster interest in science and math but are usually categorized as boys' toys. Major toy sellers have listened, thanks to the millennial generation's unrivaled size, trendsetting ability and buying power. Target eliminated gender-specific sections in 2015. The same year, Disney banished BOYS and GIRLS labels from its children's costumes, inviting girls to dress as Captain America and boys as Belle. Last year, Mattel did away with boys' and girls' toy divisions in favor of nongendered sections: dolls or cars, for instance.

But the Creatable World doll is something else entirely. Unlike model airplanes or volcano kits, dolls have faces like ours, upon which we can project our own self-image and anxieties. Mattel tested the doll with 250 families across seven states, including 15 children who identify as trans, gender-nonbinary or gender-fluid and rarely see themselves reflected in the media, let alone their playthings. "There were a couple of gender-creative kids who told us that they dreaded Christmas Day because they knew whatever they got under the Christmas tree, it wasn't made for them," says Monica Dreger, head of consumer insights at Mattel. "This is the first doll that you can find under the tree and see is for them because it can be for anyone."

'I THINK THAT BEING A COMPANY TODAY, YOU HAVE TO HAVE A COMBINATION OF SOCIAL JUSTICE ALONG WITH COMMERCE, AND THAT BALANCE CAN BE TRICKY.'

The population of young people who identify as gender-nonbinary is growing. Though no large surveys have been done of kids younger than 10, a recent study by the Williams Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles, found that 27% of California teens identify as gender-nonconforming. And a 2018 Pew study found 35% of Gen Z-ers (born 1995 to 2015) say they personally know someone who uses gender-neutral pronouns like *they* and *them,* compared with just 16% of Gen X-ers (born 1965 to 1980). The patterns are projected to continue with Generation Alpha, born in 2010 and later. Those kids, along with boys who want to play with dolls and girls who identify as "tomboys" and don't gravitate toward fashion doll play, are an untapped demographic. Mattel currently has 19% market share in the $8 billion doll industry; gaining just 1 more point could translate into $80 million in revenue for the company.

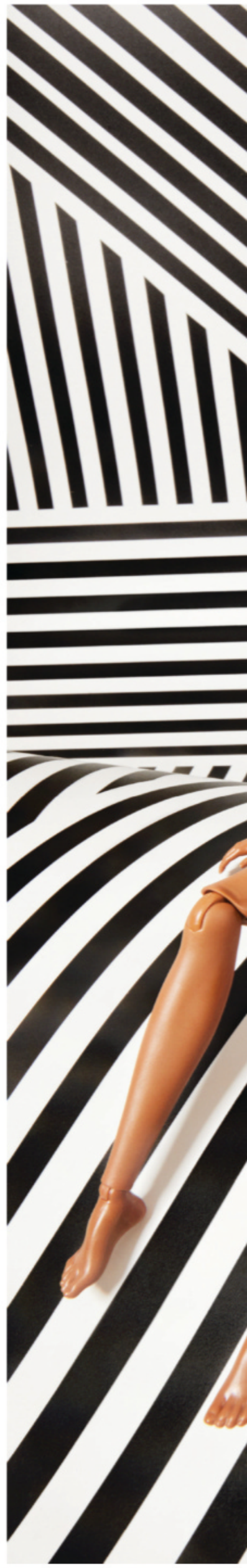
Mattel sees an even broader potential for Creatable World beyond gender-creative kids. In testing, the company found that Generation Alpha children chafed at labels and mandates no matter their gender identity: they didn't want to be told whom a toy was designed for or how to play with it. They were delighted with a doll that had no name and could transform and adapt according to their whims.

But it's parents who are making the purchasing decisions, and no adult is going to have a neutral reaction to this doll. In testing groups, several parents felt the "gender-neutral" branding of the toy pushed a political agenda, and some adults objected to the notion of their sons ever playing with dolls. Mattel president Richard Dickson insists the doll isn't intended as a statement. "We're not in the business of politics," he says, "and we respect the decision any parent makes around how they raise their kids. Our job is to stimulate imaginations. Our toys are ultimately canvases for cultural conversation, but it's your conversation, not ours; your opinion, not ours."

Yet even offering customers that blank canvas will be seen as political in a country where gender-neutral bathrooms still stir protests. Mattel joins a cohort of other companies that have chosen a side in a divisive political climate. Just in the past two years, Nike launched a campaign starring Colin Kaepernick after the NFL dropped him from the league for kneeling during the national anthem to protest racism. Airbnb offered free housing to people displaced in the face of President Trump's travel ban. Dick's Sporting Goods stopped selling assault-style weapons after the Parkland shooting. All these companies have reported eventual sales bumps after staking their claim in the culture wars.

When pressed with these examples, Dickson admits that staying neutral is not an option if you want to be perceived as an innovator. "I think that being a company today, you have to have a combination of social justice along with commerce, and that balance can be tricky," Dickson says. "Not everyone will appreciate you or agree with you."

In fact, dissent among boomers, Gen X-ers and even millennials may be a positive sign, according to Mattel's own researchers. "If all the parents who saw the dolls said, 'This is what we've been waiting for,' we wouldn't be doing our jobs," says Dreger. "That would mean this should have already been in the



PHOTOGRAPH BY JUCO FOR TIME

Creatable World dolls come with wigs and clothing that let them be boys, girls, neither or both

market. So we're maybe a little behind where kids are, ahead of where parents are, and that's exactly where we need to be."

ANYONE WALKING into Mattel's headquarters would find it difficult to imagine a gender-neutral world of play. A huge mural depicts some of the company's most recognizable toys. A classic bouffanted version of Barbie in a black-and-white bathing suit and heels squints down at visitors. In another picture close by, a little boy puffs out his chest and rips open his shirt, Superman style, to reveal a red Mattel logo that reads STRENGTH AND EXCELLENCE. Even a toddler would be able to discern the messaging on how a woman and a man are expected to look from these images.

But the evolution within Mattel is obvious once visitors make their way past the entryway and into the designers' cubicles. Inspiration boards are covered with pictures of boys in skirts and girls in athletic gear. The most striking images are mashups of popular teen stars: the features of Camila Mendes and Cole Sprouse, who play Veronica and Jughead on *Riverdale,* combine to create one androgynous face, and Millie Bobby Brown and Finn Wolfhard, who play the main characters on *Stranger Things,* blend into a single floppy-haired, genderless person with sharp cheekbones.

In the past decade, toy companies have begun to tear down gender barriers. Smaller businesses like GoldieBlox, which launched in 2012 and builds engineering toys targeting girls, and large companies like Lego, which created the female-focused Lego Friends line the same year, have made STEM toys for girls more mainstream. Small independent toymakers have pushed things further with dollhouses painted green and yellow instead of purple and pink, or cooking kits that are entirely white instead of decorated with flowers or butterflies.

Perhaps it's surprising, then, that nobody has beaten Mattel to creating a gender-neutral doll. A deep Google search for such a toy turns up baby dolls or strange-looking plush creatures that don't resemble any human who ever walked this earth. Nothing comes close to the Creatable World doll that Mattel has conjured up over the past two years.

Scientists have debunked the idea that boys are simply born wanting to play with trucks and girls wanting to nurture dolls. A study by psychologists Lisa Dinella and Erica Weisgram, co-editors of *Gender Typing of Children's Toys: How Early Play Experiences Impact Development,* found that

when wheeled toys were painted white—and thus deprived of all color signaling whether they were "boys' toys" or "girls' toys"—girls and boys chose to play with the wheeled toys equally often. Dinella points out that removing gendered cues from toys facilitates play between boys and girls, crucial practice for when men and women must interact in the workplace and home as adults. She adds that millennials (born 1981 to 1996) have pushed to share child-care responsibilities, and that battle ought to begin in the playroom. "If boys, like girls, are encouraged to learn parental skills with doll play at a young age, you wind up with more nurturing and empathetic fathers," she says.

And yet creating a doll to appeal to all kids, regardless of gender, remains risky. "There are children who are willing to cross those gender boundaries that society places on toys, but there's often a cost that comes with crossing those boundaries," Dinella says. "That cost seems to be bigger for boys than it is for girls." Some of those social repercussions no doubt can be traced to parental attitudes. In Los Angeles, the majority of the seven parents in an early testing group for Creatable World complained the doll "feels political," as one mom put it.

"I don't think my son should be playing with dolls," she continued. "There's a difference between a girl with a truck and a boy with a Barbie, and a boy with a Barbie is a no-no."

The only dad in the group shrugged and said, "I don't know. My daughter is friends with a boy who wears dresses. I used to be against that type of thing, but now I'm O.K. with it."

'I DON'T KNOW. MY DAUGHTER IS FRIENDS WITH A BOY WHO WEARS DRESSES. I USED TO BE AGAINST THAT TYPE OF THING, BUT NOW I'M O.K. WITH IT.'

In videos of those testing groups, many parents fumbled with the language to describe the dolls, confusing gender (how a person identifies) with sexuality (whom a person is attracted to), mixing up gender-neutral (without gender) and trans (a person who has transitioned from one gender to another) and fretting about the mere idea of a boy playing with a doll. A second mom in Los Angeles asked before seeing the doll, "Is it transgender? How am I supposed to have a conversation with my kid about that?" After examining the toy and discussing gender fluidity with the other parents, she declared, "It's just too much. Can't we go back to 1970?"

After the session, Dreger analyzed the parental response. "Adults get so tied up in the descriptions and definitions," she said. "They jump to this idea of sexuality. They make themselves more anxious about it. For kids it's much more intuitive."

Why, exactly, a new generation is rejecting categorizations that society has been using for millennia is up for debate. Eighty-one percent of Gen Z-ers believe that a person shouldn't be defined by gender, according to a poll by the J. Walter Thompson marketing group. But it's not just about gender—it's about authenticity, whether real or perceived. Macho male actors and glam, ultra-feminine actresses have less cultural cachet than they used to. Gen Z, with its well-honed radar for anything overly polished or fake-seeming, prefers YouTube confessionals about battling everything from zits to depression. When the New York *Times* recently asked Generation Z to pick a name for itself, the most-liked response was "Don't call us anything."

Perhaps their ideas of gender have expanded under the influence of parents who are beginning to reject practices like gender-reveal parties that box kids in even before they are born. Jenna Karvunidis, who popularized the gender-reveal party, recently revealed on Facebook that her now 10-year-old child is gender-nonconforming and that she regrets holding the party. "She's telling me, 'Mom, there are many genders. Mom, there's many different sexualities and all different types,' and I take her lead on that," Karvunidis said in an interview with NPR.

Perhaps it's that a generation of kids raised on video games where they could create their own avatars, with whatever styling and gender they please, has helped open up the way kids think about identity. Perhaps the simple fact that more celebrities like Amandla Stenberg and Sam Smith are coming out as gender-nonbinary has made it easier for other young people to do the same. Generation Alpha, the most diverse generation in America in all senses of the term, is likely to grow up with even more liberal views on gender.

"This is a rallying cry of this generation," says Jess Weiner, a cultural consultant for large companies looking to tap into modern-day markets and navigate issues of gender. "Companies in this day and age have to evolve or else they die, they go away … And part of that evolving is trying to understand things they didn't prior."

MATTEL ISN'T the first company to notice the trend of young shoppers moving away from gender-specific products. Rob Smith—the founder of the Phluid Project, a gender-free clothing store that caters to the LGBTQ+ community in New York City—says several large corporations, including Mattel, have approached him for advice on how to market to the young masses. "I work with a lot of companies who are figuring out that the separation between male and female is less important to young consumers who don't want to be boxed into anything," he says. "There's men's shampoo

and women's shampoo, but it's just all shampoo. Companies are starting to investigate that in-between space in order to win over Gen Z."

Still, Mattel enters a politically charged debate at a precarious moment for corporations in America, where companies that want to gain customer loyalty are being pushed to one aisle or the other. A study from the PR agency Weber Shandwick found 47% of millennials think CEOs should take stances on social issues. Some 51% of millennials surveyed said they are more likely to buy products from companies run by activist CEOs, like Patagonia's Rose Marcario *(see page 12)*. Now, if you walk into a Patagonia store, you'll see a sign that reads, THE PRESIDENT STOLE YOUR LAND. TAKE ACTION NOW.

Such activism is often born of self-interest: companies want to appeal to liberal customers and retain young employees and their allies. They face little risk by speaking up but major consequences by sitting on the sidelines. In August, customers boycotted Equinox and SoulCycle—two companies that have aggressively courted the LGBTQ+ community—when reports emerged that their key investor was holding a fundraiser for Trump with ticket prices as high as $250,000. According to data analyses by Second Measure, a month later, SoulCycle attendance is down almost 13%.

Weiner says SoulCycle's experience should serve as a cautionary tale. "I think businesses of any size now recognize that their consumer base values transparency over any other attribute. They want to know that your board is reflective of your choices, and that's caught a lot of businesses off-guard," Weiner says. "You can't talk about gender equity in your commercial and then have no women on your board. They have to be savvy."

Now, a toy company has chosen to make a product specifically to appeal to the progressive part of the country. Lisa McKnight, the senior vice president of the global doll portfolio at Mattel, says major retailers have been enthusiastic about Creatable World. "They're excited about the message of inclusivity," she says. "The world is becoming a more diverse and inclusive place, and some people want to do more to support that." When pressed on the risks, she lays out the alternative. "Candidly, we ask ourselves if another company were to launch a product line like this, how would we feel? And after that gut check, we are proceeding."

CREATABLE WORLD WILL LAUNCH exclusively online first, in part for Mattel to better control the message. That includes giving sneak previews to select influencers and leaders in the LGBTQ+ community. Selling the doll in retail stores will be more complicated. For one thing, there's the question of where to place it in stores to attract the attention of shoppers who might not venture into a doll section. Store clerks will have to be trained in what pronouns to use when talking about the doll and how to handle anxious parents' questions about it. And then there are practical concerns. Dickson admits the company is ready for the possibility that protests against Creatable World dolls could hurt other Mattel brands, namely Barbie.

Mattel has taken risks before. Most recently, in 2016, it added three new body types to the Barbie doll: tall, petite and, most radically, curvy. It was the first time the company had made a major change to one of the most recognizable brands—and bodies—in the world in the doll's almost-60-year history. The change helped propel Barbie from a retrograde doll lambasted by feminists for her impossible shape to a modern toy. She is now on the rise. Her sales have been up for the past eight quarters, and she saw a 14% sales bump in the past year alone, according to Mattel.

> **'I DON'T THINK MY SON SHOULD BE PLAYING WITH DOLLS. THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A GIRL WITH A TRUCK AND A BOY WITH A BARBIE, AND A BOY WITH A BARBIE IS A NO-NO.'**

But Mattel felt late to the game when it changed Barbie's body: For years the Mindy Kalings and Ashley Grahams of the world had been championing fuller body types. Parents had been demanding change with boycotts and letter campaigns. By contrast, Creatable World feels like uncharted territory.

Consider children's media: Disney hasn't introduced a major gay character in any of its movies, let alone a gender-nonconforming one. There are no trans superheroes on the big screen. Even characters whose creators say are queer—like Dumbledore in the *Harry Potter* series—haven't actually come out on the page or the screen. In that pop-culture space, a gender-neutral doll seems radical.

Even though there is no scientific evidence to prove that this is the case, there will be customers who say that even exposing their children to a gender-nonbinary doll through commercials or in a play group would threaten to change their child's identity. This debate will spin out into sociopolitical questions about whether the types of toys children play with affect their sense of identity and gender.

That conversation, if it comes, is worth it, according to Dickson. "I think if we could have a hand in creating the idea that a boy can play with a perceived girl toy and a girl can play with a perceived boy toy, we would have contributed to a better, more sensitive place of perception in the world today," he says. "And even more so for the kids that find themselves in that challenging place, if we can make that moment in their life a bit more comfortable, and knowing we created something that makes them feel recognized, that's a beautiful thing." ◻

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Time Off

A VILLAIN FOR OUR TIMES
Todd Phillips' *Joker* exults in the emptiness of our culture

INSIDE

TRANSPARENT *GOES OFF THE RAILS*

A SINGULAR MEMOIR OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

ANN PATCHETT ON WRITING BAD MOTHERS

MOVIES

With this Joker, the joke is on us

By Stephanie Zacharek

LET'S GET THIS OUT OF THE WAY FIRST: *JOKER,* a stand-alone origin story about one of Batman's biggest nemeses, has every right to exist. The movie, directed by Todd Phillips and starring Joaquin Phoenix, is marked by some unhinged brutality and more than a little hero worship of a villainous character. But art, of any sort, can't and doesn't cause violence. And if, as a culture, we'd historically made it a practice to censor violent, exhilarating movies, we'd have no *Wild Bunch,* no *Bonnie and Clyde,* no *Pulp Fiction.*

But movies are also purely of their time. We can't watch movies in a vacuum, and no matter how entertaining they are, they can't blot out the larger world we live in. By now you may have read that *Joker*—which opens in much of the world on Oct. 4—is a masterpiece, that Phoenix gives the most astonishing performance of the year, that the picture is a superior, more thoughtful version of our garden-variety superhero movie. What's more, it won the top prize, the Golden Lion, at the Venice Film Festival, a rarity for a big-budget entertainment made by a major Hollywood studio. That could be the first of all sorts of accolades, up to and including multiple Academy Awards. Yet none of that means you have to like *Joker,* or buy the half-baked social analysis it's selling. Phillips may want us to think he's giving us a movie all about the emptiness of our culture—but really, he's offering a prime example of it.

Joker dovetails with, but doesn't strictly follow, DC Universe Batman lore. Before the Joker becomes the Joker, he's Arthur Fleck, played by Phoenix, an odd, lonely guy who lives at home with the mother (played by a wan Frances Conroy) he love-hates. Arthur works for a sad rent-a-clown joint, and nothing ever goes right for him. The movie is set in a Gotham City that's a lazy approximation of gritty early-1980s New York, complete with garbage strikes and "super rats" overrunning the city. On the job in clown costume, Arthur gets beaten up by a mob of nasty punks—and then almost gets fired because they stole and broke the GOING OUT OF BUSINESS sign he was twirling for a client.

More bad stuff happens, and Arthur gets angrier and more isolated by the minute. When the city's social services close down, he can no longer receive counseling there or get his meds. (He carries around a little laminated card that he holds out helpfully whenever he laughs inappropriately, which is pretty much all the time. It reads, "Forgive my laughter, I have a brain injury.") Arthur is mad at the world, for reasons that are easy to see. He also feels increasing animosity toward Thomas Wayne, the rich-guy father of the child who will grow up to become Batman—Wayne is running for mayor but seems to care little for the struggling poor of Gotham, like Arthur and his mother. The one bright spot of Arthur's day is watching a Johnny Carson–style talk show, hosted by a prickly comic named Murray Franklin (Robert De Niro). Arthur dreams of being a stand-up comic himself and landing a guest stint on the show. His wish will come true, eventually, but life continues beating him down, and his travails lead to a series of "See what you made me do?" acts of savagery. Violence makes him feel more in control. Killing—usually but not always with a gun—empowers him.

'You want to root for this guy until you can't root for him any longer.'

TODD PHILLIPS, director and co-writer of *Joker,* to the New York *Times*

WE KNOW how this pathology works: in America, there's a mass shooting or attempted act of violence by a troubled loner practically every other week. Phillips certainly knows that, and it's possible his intent is to open a dialogue about violence in America.

But *Joker*'s artfully constructed trailer also makes the movie look energizing and fun, "dark" in the way that appeals to misunderstood adolescents. The Joker is one of the best-loved villains among fans of comic books and comic-book movies, maybe because moody teenagers—and sometimes adults—gravitate toward the "laughing on the outside, crying on the inside" clown aesthetic. Only a handful of people, mostly critics, have seen *Joker* so far, and the reviews have been largely positive. But many fans of the character, stoked by the trailer, are so excited about the film—and about Phoenix's performance—that they're already defiantly in love with it, sight unseen. I wrote a negative early review of the film from Venice, and my social-media feed was immediately filled with angry, derogatory, sometimes aggressively misogynistic missives from people who haven't yet seen the movie. This is the world we live in now. It's also the world *Joker* is slipping into.

Of course, we're supposed to feel sympathy for Arthur, even though his problem is an age-old movie-psychology cliché: he just hasn't had enough *love.* Before long, he becomes a vigilante folk hero—his first signature act is to kill a trio of annoying Wall Street spuds while riding the subway, which inspires the masses to don clown masks and march around the city bearing KILL THE RICH! placards.

Joker purports to be a statement about our own troubled era, and it bristles with sensations, like molecules vibrating in Brownian motion. But

Agents of chaos

The Joker has long been one of the most mysterious and unsettling villains in the canon; among the actors putting their spin on the character:

JACK NICHOLSON
Nicholson upstaged Batman himself with his deranged, vaudevillian performance in the 1989 film *Batman*

MARK HAMILL
The man who played Luke Skywalker has voiced a smug Joker in the cartoon for over 25 years

HEATH LEDGER
Ledger won a posthumous Oscar for his performance in 2008's disturbing *The Dark Knight*

JARED LETO
Leto starred as a violent, erratic Joker in the 2016 film *Suicide Squad,* which was panned by critics

sensations aren't the same as ideas, and Phillips (perhaps best known as the director of the *Hangover* movies) and his co-writer, Scott Silver, spin out dozens of alleged profundities that either fall flat or contradict one another. Just before one of his more violent tirades, Arthur muses, "Everybody just screams at each other. Nobody's civil anymore." Who doesn't feel that way in our terrible modern times? But Arthur's observation is one of those truisms that's so true it just slides off the wall, a message that both the left and the right can get behind and use for their own aims.

As a character, the Joker appeals deeply to the human tendency toward self-pity, and Phoenix's performance leans hard on that. Skills on display include but are not limited to leering; jeering; air-horn-style blasts of laughter timed for maximum audience discomfort; funky-chicken-style dance moves; the occasional blank, dead stare; and assorted moony expressions indicating soulful lonerism. He hops around like an unhinged Emmett Kelly, twisting his physique into weird, unsettling shapes. His body has a rubbery angularity, like a poultry bone soaked in Coca-Cola. You could call it great acting; it's certainly a *lot* of acting. But instead of inspiring compassion, Phoenix wrings it out of us. He's a wonderful actor, but this material brings out the showiest in him, not the best.

Meanwhile, the movie lionizes and glamorizes Arthur even as it shakes its head, faux-sorrowfully, over his violent behavior. Phillips borrows heavily from Martin Scorsese movies like *The King of Comedy* and *Taxi Driver.* There's a *Taxi Driver*–style subplot involving a neighbor in Arthur's building, played by Zazie Beetz. Arthur has a crush on her, and though he does her no harm, there's still something creepy about his attentiveness to her, as if rejection would be just one more reasonable explanation for why he's blowing his stack all the time. He could easily be adopted as the patron saint of incels.

ARTHUR IS A MESS, but we're also supposed to think he's kind of great, a misunderstood savant. Dressed up for his big TV moment in a turquoise paisley shirt, marigold vest and dapper cranberry suit (admittedly a marvelous feat of costume design, courtesy of Mark Bridges), Arthur struts down an outdoor stairway like a rock-'n'-roll hero. It's the most energizing moment in the movie, but what is it winding us up for? Arthur inspires chaos and anarchy—in addition to being a murderer, plain and simple—but the movie makes it look like he's starting a revolution, where the rich are taken down, the poor get everything they need and deserve, and the sad guys who can't get a date become heroes. Is he a villain or a spokesperson for the downtrodden? The movie wants it both ways. Its doublespeak feels dishonest.

In that context, it's painful to bring up the mass shooting in Aurora, Colo., during a midnight showing of Christopher Nolan's *The Dark Knight Rises* in 2012. (The shooter pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity, a purely Jokeresque defense; he was convicted and sentenced to life in prison without parole.) I felt terrible for Nolan, that a picture he'd made should be used as a backdrop for this kind of horror. "I would not presume to know anything about the victims of the shooting, but that they were there last night to watch a movie," he said in a statement at the time. "I believe movies are one of the great American art forms and the shared experience of watching a story unfold on screen is an important and joyful pastime." Movies don't cause violence—*The Dark Knight Rises* didn't. But *Joker* made me realize that my tolerance for shoddily thought-out visions of glamorized nihilism is lower than ever. Sometimes a movie makes you recoil—and no matter how many awards it wins, your instincts are the only golden thing that matters. ☐

OPENING PAGE AND THIS PAGE: NIKO TAVERNISE—WARNER BROS.; JOKERS: EVERETT (4)

REVIEW

In Ryan Murphy's Netflix debut, a *Politician* is born

By Judy Berman

THERE'S SOMETHING DISTINCTLY WES ANDERSON–ESQUE about *The Politician,* a semisatirical take on student government that may be the most hyped new Netflix show of 2019. Debuting Sept. 27, it features lush production design, stylized performances and teens talking like they're in an Oscar Wilde play. Anderson alums Gwyneth Paltrow and Bob Balaban play the parents of title character Payton Hobart (Broadway and *Pitch Perfect* star Ben Platt). Though the series unfolds amid the Spanish colonial mansions of Santa Barbara, the credits are set to twee icon Sufjan Stevens' orchestral anthem "Chicago."

In fact, *The Politician* is the creation of Ryan Murphy (with collaborators Brad Falchuk and Ian Brennan) and the first product of his record $300 million Netflix development deal. His voice becomes so conspicuous as its first season progresses that the show winds up being the purest expression of his sensibility to date. Like *American Horror Story,* it tackles contemporary anxieties in overwrought yet imaginative ways. Like *Glee,* it's about young people figuring out who they are; queerness abounds, though in a post-*Pose* world, casual fluidity is the rule. Authentic emotion coexists with camp. There's singing, dancing, violence, stunt casting, side plots ripped from the headlines. The show is a lot. And it seems destined to be both popular and polarizing.

We meet Payton, the superrich son of a doting mom (Paltrow) and hated little brother of twin preppy nightmares Martin (Trevor Eason) and Luther (Trey Eason), in his senior year at posh Saint Sebastian High. He's applying to Harvard—or, more accurately, lobbying for admission—and running for student body president. Both campaigns are part of his lifelong plan to become President of the United States, an all-consuming goal he shares with the small team of equally precocious kids he's recruited to help propel him all the way to the White House.

Payton (Platt) has a plan for that—and a supportive mom (Paltrow) in his corner

THE HITCH COMES when River (David Corenswet), a handsome jock with whom Payton had an affair, joins the race at the urging of his spiteful girlfriend, Astrid (Lucy Boynton). Gentle and kind, with a moving openness about his mental health, River connects with voters on a human level. Payton, by contrast, works hard and has good ideas but can't conceal his calculations. River is a shoo-in—until he kills himself.

Murphy & Co. are careful to separate his suicide from his sexuality. But there are plenty of other false notes. Astrid is annoyingly inconsistent. A side plot about Payton's running mate, the chronically ill Infinity Jackson (Zoey Deutch), quickly goes off the rails; though it's fun to see Jessica Lange play her deranged grandma, the resemblance to Hulu's *The Act* (and the true story it's based on) falls somewhere between parody and appropriation. Not all of the young actors can keep up with a witty ensemble that also includes Judith Light, Bette Midler and January Jones.

Despite these nonminor problems, I couldn't stop watching. Murphy productions are never boring, and this one bursts with frothy twists and amusing set pieces. An episode that detours into the mind of a swing voter—a burnout who just wants to ogle boobs—makes its point about the gulf between politicians and their alienated constituents.

Yet it's Payton who makes the show more than just fun. Though he's drowned his emotions in ambition, that numbness haunts him. His plight raises the question of whether you can make a positive impact on the world without being a good person—or if inner purity can even hinder that work. Platt makes this internal conflict riveting. "I wanna know you," Payton's Harvard interviewer says in the show's first scene. "The real you." The request stumps him. But by the end of the season, he's discovered more of a self than he ever knew he had. ◻

Judith Light on Transparent

REVIEW

A requiem for *Transparent*

Jill Soloway's Amazon dramedy *Transparent* debuted to near universal praise and an armful of Emmys. But social progress comes at you fast: the show faced criticism for casting a cisgender man, Jeffrey Tambor, as Maura Pfefferman, a trans woman whose belated coming-out sends her family on their own journeys of self-discovery. After three strong seasons and a redundant fourth, Tambor was fired amid reports of sexual misconduct.

This explains but doesn't excuse *Transparent: Musicale Finale,* the excruciating film that comes to Prime on Sept. 27. After Maura's off-screen death, the self-involved Pfeffermans jazz-hand their way to unearned redemption. Even for a somewhat tongue-in-cheek musical, the songs are howlers: "Your boundary is my trigger!" goes one refrain. Soloway has often shown insight into Jewish identity, yet here, the New Agey suggestion that Jews feeling joy can heal the wounds of the Holocaust is risible. "Take the concentration out of the camps/ Concentrate it on some song and dance," the Pfeffermans crow in a number that would beggar belief even if concentration camps weren't already on viewers' minds. Rarely has a finale so thoroughly undermined a great show. —*J.B.*

REVIEW

In Harlem, a *Godfather* history forgot

SOMETIME BETWEEN THE RELEASE OF Howard Hawks' *Scarface* in 1932 and *The Sopranos'* finale 75 years later, the mafioso became a quintessential American archetype: an outsider with no traditional path to wealth who seeks his fortune through violence. Al Capone and Lucky Luciano have retained their mythical status decades after their deaths. Yet Bumpy Johnson, a black crime boss who ruled Harlem in the mid–20th century—a pivotal era for both organized crime and race relations—has remained a relatively obscure figure in pop culture.

With *Godfather of Harlem,* premiering Sept. 29 on Epix, creators Chris Brancato and Paul Eckstein *(Narcos)* team up with executive producer and star Forest Whitaker to give this story the deep dive it deserves. Set near the end of Johnson's life, it opens in 1963, with his release from Alcatraz after 11 years behind bars. Back home, he finds Harlem changed. Young kids have risen in the ranks. The Italians are making a play for his turf. Before Bumpy gets the chance to take his proverbial coat off, everybody wants something from him.

That includes the leaders of a civil rights movement that's starting to gain ground. Malcolm X (Nigél Thatch, reprising his *Selma* role) and Congressman Adam Clayton Powell Jr. (Giancarlo Esposito, smartly cast) aren't just part of the 1960s setting; along with Bumpy, they represent divergent paths to influence for black men in a racist society. While Powell used politics and Christian faith to effect change, Malcolm X embraced Islam and activism. Johnson, whom Whitaker plays with quiet gravitas, was known for charity as well as brutality. But he got rich off the very drugs Malcolm X viewed as a scourge on the black community. Far from a mindless shoot-'em-up—though it can get bloody—*Godfather* dissects these complicated relationships even as it examines how white supremacy operates within the criminal underworld.

Between this thoughtfulness and scenes of intense violence, Brancato and Eckstein sometimes struggle to maintain a consistent tone. Add subplots about Bumpy's family, crooked cops, the Italians (Paul Sorvino, Vincent D'Onofrio, Chazz Palminteri) and star-crossed love, and episodes can get crowded. Still, the show's ambition pays off in the rare gangster epic we haven't seen before. —J.B.

Whitaker, who also executive-produced the series, stars as Johnson

THE POLITICIAN: NETFLIX; TRANSPARENT: AMAZON; GODFATHER OF HARLEM: EPIX

MEMOIR

Speaking truth to trauma

By Laurie Halse Anderson

FOR ALL THE LIGHT THAT #METOO HAS SHINED into dark corners, many among us still swallow the destructive myth that most rapists are armed strangers lurking in alleys. The past two years have seen countless powerful examples of the truth: rapists are usually someone the victim knows, often quite well. But the stranger-danger emphasis that remains creates a shield, allowing perpetrators to avoid seeing themselves as doing real harm.

Jeannie Vanasco, an English professor and a survivor, wanted to delve into the motivations and behavior of rapists. In her new memoir, *Things We Didn't Talk About When I Was a Girl,* she asks a question central to our national conversation about abuse: "Is it possible to be a good person who commits a terrible act?" Vanasco's 2017 debut memoir, *The Glass Eye,* explored grief and mental illness. Her father died when she was in her first year of college, a devastating blow that was compounded by several traumatic incidents.

Things We Didn't Talk About zeroes in on one: being raped by a close friend when she was 19 years old. More than a decade after the attack, Vanasco decided to look for her rapist and see if he would speak to her about what happened. The idea of such a confrontation is bold, unsettling and timely. She wanted to find out how a person who hurts others talks to himself about his actions. If we are ever going to reduce sexual violence, it's a critically important question.

VANASCO BEGINS THE BOOK with meandering discussions of memory and writing as she describes her search for the man she hasn't spoken to in 14 years. But the tension accelerates and the structure tightens when she finds "Mark," and he agrees to several recorded conversations. The author intersperses transcripts of those conversations with her analysis of them—a close read of shame, heartbreak and anger. "I'm tired of white, educated, middle-class guys, like Mark, not being held accountable," Vanasco writes. At the same time, she retraces the patterns of self-doubt so many survivors battle. "Does my silence make me complicit? I think it does. Or maybe I'm finding another way to blame myself."

At times, Vanasco downplays her pain and the depth of her trauma to Mark, aware of yet unable to correct what she calls "gender performing." Those moments can make for frustrating reading. But they provide a vital examination of a kind of reflexive niceness, familiar to many women, which can create a feeling of safety by deflecting conflict, while also inhibiting accountability and growth.

Vanasco's memoir features verbatim transcripts of her conversations with her attacker

Vanasco opens her process of self-examination to the reader. Along with questioning Mark, she explores her own responses, first to the attack, then to the interviews. She unpacks her struggle to describe what happened as rape and how the FBI's definition, updated in 2013 to be more nuanced, helped her accept the crime for what it was.

Mark's own process is murkier: while he admits in the book that he raped Vanasco, he struggles to see himself as a rapist. His apologies alternate between sincerity and infuriating self-interest. His comment—"Nice guys are a total lie"—took my breath away. There are honorable men in the world; his own failure doesn't apply to all. But Vanasco writes with a fair hand. Mark's depression and solitude add a reluctant pathos to the book.

What Vanasco's memoir lacks in research-oriented context, it makes up for in honesty. She has created a reckoning with injustice told in real time, with all the hesitations and concerns of a wounded heart. She provides few answers but compels readers to ask as we all move forward: How many abusers would act if they knew they'd be called to account, not only legally, but also morally?

Anderson is the author, most recently, of the poetry memoir Shout, *long-listed for the 2019 National Book Award*

FICTION

Horror in the Pennsylvania woods

By Peter Allen Clark

WHEN KATE REESE FLEES AN ABUSIVE boyfriend with her son Christopher, she hopes small-town life will provide a bright future. But the creepy cover art and October release date suggest a darker fate is held within the 700 twisted pages of Stephen Chbosky's *Imaginary Friend*.

Chbosky, an author and a filmmaker, is known in publishing for his only novel, 1999's *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*. Fans of that book should be warned: though centered on a young person, *Imaginary Friend* is less a story of awkward youth and more a gleeful meditation on human brutality.

A gleeful meditation on human brutality

Once Kate and 7-year-old Christopher arrive in Mill Grove, Pa., the child finds himself drawn to the woods by a face in a fluffy cloud. Soon after, he grows mysteriously smarter, suffers painful headaches and feels a desperate compulsion to build a tree house in the forest. The events that follow unravel the town and lead to the worst Christmas ever.

There are echoes of Stephen King here: a town destroyed by the supernatural, a tight group of (male) children, religious violence and a belief that people are bad. But Chbosky's horror writing succeeds and stands on its own; at least a few of his terror vignettes (so much blood!) will stir even the hardiest of readers.

At its core, though packaged in a story of the paranormal, the novel is about recognizable human conflict. Friends and strangers harm one another in ways that evoke timely political and social battles; there are kids with guns, school violence and a global refugee crisis. One white character even tells a Middle Eastern bystander to go "back to where you came from."

But the mirror Chbosky holds to society sometimes feels dated, particularly when it comes to gender. The novel's heroes are little boys and male police officers and veterans, while older women and housewives are mostly relegated to sinister roles in the background. The book also wields religion like a stern cudgel, with mild sins becoming a source of torment, yet it never explores redemption for evildoers.

But the nine years Chbosky reportedly spent writing the book shows in his well-crafted scares, snappy pacing and finely tuned plot. Despite its faults, *Imaginary Friend* is well worth the time for those who dare. ◻

Chbosky wrote and directed the Perks *adaptation*

VANASCO: DENNIS DRENNER; CHBOSKY: MEREDITH MORRIS; BOOKS: KIM BUBELLO FOR TIME

ROUNDUP

Frights and fantasy

These three fall books—an appreciation of female genre-fiction authors, a return to a parallel world and a haunted college story—promise to keep readers up at night.
—Annabel Gutterman

NINTH HOUSE
Leigh Bardugo
Ivy League secret societies get an extra dose of mystery and magic in Bardugo's adult debut, following Alex—who can see ghosts—as she enters a sinister social scene.

THE SECRET COMMONWEALTH
Philip Pullman
In the second installment of the *Book of Dust* trilogy, Lyra's daemon witnesses a murder—leading them both to discover hidden truths about a haunted city.

MONSTER, SHE WROTE
Lisa Kröger and Melanie R. Anderson
Dive into the lives of Mary Shelley, Shirley Jackson and more women behind legendary spooky stories in this anthology, which celebrates female trailblazers in genre fiction.

7 Questions

Ann Patchett The best-selling author on totally rewriting her new book, being mad at her neighbors and the inaccuracy of memories

Your new novel, *The Dutch House*, is about families who circle in and out of a grand house in Pennsylvania. Did you have a particular house in mind? No. It was important to me to only have a few details because I believe that everybody has one, if not several houses, that they are completely in love with that they've either been in or been past. The book was going to be called *Maeve,* and because I own a bookstore, I really did understand that *The Dutch House* was a much better title. The words *Dutch* and *house* have the same number of letters; I knew it would look really good. To me, the house is just symbolic of the life. It's a book about wealth and poverty, and the sort of whiplash of going back and forth between those two states.

The book is about Maeve, but from the point of view of her brother. Did you have any trepidation about writing as a young man? Danny was a very easy character for me to write because, oddly enough, I have known many men who are smart and charming and funny and interesting, who have no understanding of the fact that their whole life is built on the shoulders of the women who carry them around.

Andrea is the only character whose bad behavior you don't explain. Why? The greatest lack I think in my body of work, if, God forbid, you were to read it all, is that I don't write villains. I have this shortcoming that whenever I get too close to anybody, I become sympathetic to them. And I just really wanted a villain. That was why I wrote this book in first person, because all Danny knows is what Andrea chooses to show him.

This book is also about good people who are not very good mothers. From the point of view of somebody without kids, do you feel that mothers are judged overly harshly? I wrote this book, got all the way to the end, read it, hated it, threw it away and started over.

"YOU CANNOT WRITE A SYMPATHETIC CHARACTER WHO LEAVES HER CHILDREN FOR ETHICAL REASONS"

HEIDI ROSS

And I mean completely. What I realized in having it bomb so completely is that you cannot write a sympathetic character who leaves her children for ethical reasons. There is definitely a different standard for men and women, and I wanted to take that on. And I realized that I couldn't. We sing songs about Odysseus, and we pray to the Buddha [both of whom left home], and nobody thinks about their sons. I sat down on the carpet in the middle of my office. I imagined every mother on my street who has young children, and her leaving her children to go and do important work for the poor. And I was angry at all of them.

You write, "By 1968, pretty much every representation of hope in the country had been put up against a wall and shot." Is that true now? People are trying to hold up their light, and God love them. But it's a very, very tough time, and this book definitely came out of the presidential election, and the celebration of wealth, the idea that nothing could be better than being rich.

You looked after your grandmother in her declining years. Did you identify with Elna during those scenes? It was really hard work. It was heartbreaking and just so time- and labor-intensive, and people were always saying to me, "Oh, you're so lucky." And I would think, "Oh, f-ck you." And yet, here I am, I'm 55, she died when I was 41, and I am sitting in my office looking straight at a picture of her. I miss her, I miss taking care of her. I miss her little body, vacant of her mind, and I would say to someone who was taking care of their grandmother, "You're so lucky, enjoy every minute of it."

Do you think it's possible to ever see the past as it actually was? No. I'm very, very sure that my memories are true and accurate, and if I put them up against the memories of my family or my friends, they would have very different true and accurate memories.

—BELINDA LUSCOMBE

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THAT SEEMS A LITTLE

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